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# CHAMBERS'S

# NEW RECITER

# *Chambers's New Reciter*

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WORKS OF

I. ZANGWILL
IAN MACLAREN
S. R. CROCKETT
JOHN DAVIDSON
SIR EDWIN ARNOLD
AUSTIN DOBSON
CLEMENT SCOTT
AND MANY OTHERS

EDITED BY
*R. C. H. MORISON*

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# PREFACE.

THIS work is intended to provide a companion volume of a popular character to *Chambers's Elocution*, the new edition of which has been favourably received.

The number of books for reciters is already very large; but the experience of the Editor has shown that there is always a demand for selections which are new, and not easily accessible to the average reader. The present volume—representing the gleanings of several years—is a further attempt to meet this demand.

The pieces—with the exception of a few by standard authors—have not before been included in books of a like kind, and they cover a wide range of feeling—sentiment, tenderness, pathos, and humour. It is claimed for the selections that all are well suited for recitation, no piece having been inserted merely as padding. Some of the extracts have been taken from the pages of *Chambers's Journal*, and are by writers of recognised merit.

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# CHAMBERS'S

# NEW RECITER.

## INTRODUCTORY HINTS.

THE art of Elocution, which, until lately, was little cultivated in this country, is receiving every year more and more attention. It now finds a place in the curriculum of the great majority of our educational and theological training colleges; and the recent circular issued by the Education Department, insisting that the children in elementary schools shall be taught to read with 'intelligence and expression,' should give a further stimulus to expressive reading.

There are three important points for the reader or reciter to study:

CORRECT PRONUNCIATION AND DISTINCT ARTICULATION.

DUE EMPHASIS.

SUITABLE GESTURE.

The first aim of the beginner should be distinctness of utterance. No selection, however beautiful or however dramatic, can interest an audience if the words are so imperfectly articulated that they are heard with difficulty. The old lines so often

quoted contain the essence of this first principle of good speaking:

> Learn to speak slow; all other graces
> Will follow in their proper places.

Impediments of speech—lisping, burring, stammering—may be greatly modified, or entirely cured, if distinct articulation is steadily practised.

Lisping—which is the result of the tongue resting against the teeth, thus causing *s* to be sounded as *th*—will disappear on holding the tongue back from the lower teeth, in order that its action may be free from the motion of the jaw.

'Burring' will vanish if the rough sound of *r*, instead of being pronounced in the throat, be spoken trippingly on the tongue.

Stammering will gradually yield to frequent exercises in reading with great slowness of utterance, so as to impart additional flexibility and strength to the muscles of the jaws, palate, tongue, and lips.

Freedom from provincialisms comes under the head of pronunciation. A Scotchman may have the true touch in reciting the pathetic *Last Journey* by Ian Maclaren; but the touch will be wanting if Emily Hickey's beautiful *Ballad of Lady Ellen* be recited with a similar accent.

**Emphasis** is the force which is laid on particular words to distinguish them from other words in a sentence. Nouns and verbs are, as a rule, emphatic; but as no rule is without an exception, so the reciter must be largely guided by his own common-sense. He should always keep in mind that words are meant to convey *ideas*, and the words in the sentence which are the main factors in conveying the idea are those which should receive the principal emphasis. There is perhaps no better test of a reader's intelligence than the justness of his emphasis.

Above all, there can be no really expressive delivery of any selection unless the reciter is in sympathy with the author:

> To this one standard make your just appeal,
> Here lies the golden secret—*Learn to feel.*

Gesture has been well defined by one writer as the attempt to 'realise the scene.' Effective gesture is the most difficult of all accomplishments in reciting. Miss Fanny Kemble, in enumerating the indispensable acquirements of an actor, placed these as the first three:

'To know how to stand still.
To move the hands and arms without moving the feet and legs.
To move the feet and legs without moving the hands and arms.'

These principles are equally necessary to the reciter, and until they are mastered perfect facility has not been attained.

Repose is one of the most important elements of success. No gesture should be made without a reason for it. Gesture should never be employed to picture illustrative similes.

We have seen a reciter, in declaiming Aytoun's *Charles Edward at Versailles*, produce a grotesque effect by stooping down at the words, 'As the watered garden recks not of the drought of yesterday,' and making imaginary flourishes in the air with a phantom garden-hose. 'Suit the word to the action, the action to the word,' is good counsel; but it must not be followed too literally.

In conclusion: BE DISTINCT, BE EARNEST, BE NATURAL, and you cannot fail to be effective.

A word as to the best method of committing a piece to memory may not be out of place. Teachers suggest three plans: (1) The reading of the piece over and over again until it is memorised; (2) The learning of the words sentence by sentence; (3) The writing out of the selection.

Actors invariably adopt the last method, and it is undoubtedly the best. The memory unconsciously retains the words copied, and the reading of them over once or twice afterwards is sufficient to implant them firmly.

The reader who desires more specific information on the subject of Elocution is referred to *Chambers's Elocution*, price 2s. 6d., which contains much practical advice.

# POETICAL PIECES:

## SERIOUS AND PATHETIC.

---

### THE MONK AND THE BIRD.—Sir Alfred Lyall.

In a valley encircled by endless wood,
Silent and sombre, a convent stood;
In front a garden; beyond the pale
The forest spread over hill and dale,
And its paths were seldom trod.

One summer evening of ages gone
A gray monk worked in the garden alone,
Heavily turning the deep clay soil;
And his breath came hard with the straining toil
As he prayed aloud to God:

'Alas!' cried he, 'for the path is steep,
And the goal is far, and the slow hours creep.
When shall I finish the tale of my years,
Of days in silence and nights in tears,
And come to my promised rest?'

He lifted his face to the comforting sky,
And he saw, where sat in a tree hard by,
A bird whose plumes like the rainbow shone;
It sang three notes with a silvery tone,
And as if to a new-built nest.

Over the garden he saw it flit
Into the forest; and there it lit.
Again in the leaves its song he heard;
He was fain to follow the beautiful bird,
And he entered the woodland maze.

The bird flew slowly from bough to bough,
Up the valley-side to the low hill's brow;
From the spreading beech on the mossy bank
To the willow weeping o'er marsh pools dank:
He could but follow and gaze.

Ever it fluttered above his head;
Ever he looked, and was lingering led
Through grassy glades and tangled woods,
Deep into shady solitudes
Of many a fern-clad hollow.

For he thought that a bird so rich and rare
Never had floated on summer air;
He could not lose it, he needs must roam;
It seemed to beckon and bid him come:
He could not choose but follow.

At last on a wych elm, gnarled and gray,
As the monk drew nearer, it seemed to stay,
Then spread its wings for a sudden flight
Over the tree-tops, out of his sight;
And he turned back drearily.

He reached his garden in twilight dim;
The trees looked gaunt and the convent grim.
He rang at the gate as vesper tolled,
And the porter opened it, blind and old,
And he entered wearily.

But the hall had suffered a secret change.
With unknown faces and accent strange

The monks rose up as they heard his name;
They asked his errand and whence he came,
And he told them his tale forlorn.

Some counted their beads, one muttered a prayer;
He knew not why they should gather and stare.
He stood in the midst like one distraught,
And the friendly voices in vain he sought
Of the *frères* he had left that morn.

At last came the Abbot, aged and bent;
He scanned his features with eyes intent;
And he cried, 'Be it he or his wandering ghost,
'Tis the face of the monk in the forest lost
Some forty summers agone!

'Is he roaming still, though the mass was said
And the requiem sung for a brother dead?
Does he dream he has rambled this livelong day?
'Tis two-score years since he vanished away'—
But the monk gave answer none,

Save only he said, 'Have I journeyed so long?
Welcome at last is the evensong;
Let me take the sleep I have earned so well'—
And he died that night in his ancient cell,
And the brethren closed his eyes.

So his prayer was granted: from youth to age
God shortened the term of his pilgrimage;
The sad years passed like a day's sunlight,
And the sweet-voiced bird with the plumage bright
Was a Bird of Paradise.

(From *Verses written in India*, by kind permission of the author.)

## BELSHAZZAR.

TRANSLATED FROM HEINE BY SIR THEODORE MARTIN.

The midnight hour was drawing on;
Hushed into rest lay Babylon:

All save the royal palace, where
Was the din of revel and torches' flare.

There, high within his royal hall,
Belshazzar, the king, held festival.

His nobles around him in splendour shine,
And drain down goblets of sparkling wine.

The nobles shout, and the goblets ring;
'Twas sweet to the heart of that stiff-necked king.

The cheeks of the king they flushed with flame;
As he drank he grew bolder, more dead to shame;

And, madden'd with pride, his lips let fall
Wild words that blaspheme the Great Lord of All.

More vaunting he grew, and his blasphemous sneers
Were hailed by his lordly rout with cheers.

Proudly the king has a mandate passed:
Away hie the slaves, and come back full fast.

Many gold vessels they bring with them,
The spoils of God's House in Jerusalem.

With impious hand the king caught up,
Filled to the brim, a sacred cup;

And down to the bottom he drained it dry,
And with mouth a-foam thus aloud did cry:

'Jehovah! I scoff at Thy greatness gone;
*I* am the king of Babylon!'

The terrible words were ringing still
When the king at his heart felt a secret chill.

The laughter ceased, the lords held their breath,
And all through the hall it was still as death.

And see! see there! on the white wall, see,
Comes forth what seems a man's hand to be!

And it wrote and wrote in letters of flame
On the white wall—then vanished the way it came.

The king sat staring, he could not speak;
His knees knocked together, death-pale was his cheek.

With cold fear creeping, his lords sat round;
They sat dumb-stricken, with never a sound.

The magians came, yet not one of them all
Could read the flame-writing upon the wall.

But or ever that night did to morning wane,
Belshazzar the king by his lords was slain.

[By kind permission of Sir Theodore Martin.]

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## THE VERY LAST.—J. J. Bell.

I dreamed I saw two souls set forth
Through life, and bearing loads;
They both were bent on Heaven's ascent,
But followed different roads.

The one chanced on a well-worn track
Where saints had trod before;
And, running straight, soon reached the gate
Of Rest for Evermore.

The other—God knows why he found
No path so sanctified—
Went blundering on from dawn till dawn,
Till all the world had died.

For many a tempting turn he took,
To be betrayed by Sin.
How oft he fell he wept to tell,
Yet dared to hope to win.

So, when the tired world's toils were o'er,
And all the seasons past,
Sad, sick, and sore, he reached God's door,
And crept in—least and last.

And some stood by who wondered why
The Master spake no blame;
They had not heard His tender word:
'*I* know the way you came.'

(By kind permission of the author.)

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## THE PICKET GUARD.—Lamar Fontaine.

'All quiet along the Potomac,' they say, 'except now and then a stray picket is shot, as he walks on his beat to and fro, by a rifleman off in the thicket.' 'Tis nothing—a private or two, now and then, will not count in the news of the battle; not an officer lost, only one of the men moaning out, all alone, the death-rattle. All quiet along the Potomac to-night, where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming; their tents, in the rays of the clear autumn moon, or the light of the watch-fires, are gleaming. A tremulous sigh, as the gentle night-wind through the forest-leaves softly is creeping; while stars up above, with their glittering eyes, keep guard—for the army is sleeping. There's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread as he tramps from the rock to the fountain, and thinks of the two in the low trundle bed far away in the cot

on the mountain. His musket falls slack; his face, dark and grim, grows gentle, with memories tender, as he mutters a prayer for the children asleep; for their mother—may Heaven defend her! The moon seems to shine just as brightly as then, that night when the love yet unspoken leaped up to his lips; when low-murmured vows were pledged to be ever unbroken. Then, drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes, he dashes off tears that are welling, and gathers his gun closer up to its place as if to keep down the heart-swelling. He passes the fountain, the blasted pine-tree; the footstep is lagging and weary; yet onward he goes, through the broad belt of light, toward the shades of the forest so dreary. Hark! was it night-wind that rustled the leaves? Was it moonlight so wondrously flashing? It looked like a rifle—'Ah, Mary, good-bye!' and the life-blood is ebbing and plashing. All quiet along the Potomac to-night; no sound save the rush of the river; while soft falls the dew on the face of the dead—the picket's off duty for ever.

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## THE 'AIDAR'S' MASTER.*—H. D. Rawnsley, M.A.

We had passed Messina's Straits
And the whirlpool at the gates,
When suddenly in Adria we saw the rockets leap;
And we heard our captain say
As we lowered boats away,
'She cannot last much longer, for her hull is lying deep.'

And we toiled through all that night,
And by gray of morning light,

* Mr William John Nutman, who received the decoration of the Albert Medal of the first class for an act of great bravery on the occasion of the foundering of his ship in a heavy sea. The passengers and crew, with the exception of Mr Nutman and an injured fireman, were rescued by the life-boats of the steamship *Staffordshire*. Mr Nutman refused to leave the disabled fireman, and the two men were eventually picked up, the master clinging to the bottom of an upturned boat, and still holding his helpless comrade.

Though the master still stood by her, we had rescued twenty-nine;
But he cried from off the wreck:
'With a wounded man on deck,
What master would forsake a man? His fate shall sure be mine.'

And our hearts were sorely tried
As we pulled off from her side,
For his courage seemed to shame us, as from death and doom we fled.
Then the *Aidar* rolled in pain,
Foundered head-first in the main,
And we felt the whirlpool surges as we plied our oars in dread.

Oh, the glory of that grave!
Oh, the wild, unfeeling wave!
Never better heart of Englishman had sunk beneath the sea.
What a death to show man great!
What a deed outfacing fate!
Britain's sons by such self-conquest shall a wide world's conquerors be.

But we saw a dark thing float:
God be praised! The *Aidar's* boat—
Bottom up! with men upon her!—fireman, master! How we cheered!
How we rowed across the swirl
Heedless all of water-whirl!
How the sea-foam sprang right over, as for rescue straight we steered!

But the master bravely cried,
When the coxswain came beside:
'Save the fireman!—he is helpless! I am sound of lung and bone!
He who brought me from the deep,
Twenty fathoms, sure can keep.
Life or death, it little matters, if there 's duty to be done.'

So with skill of hand and oar,
Very gently then we bore
The fireman, nigh to swooning from the bitter cold and pain.
But no word of praise would come
As full-hearted we went home,
With the truest master-mariner that ever sailed the main.

(From *Ballads of Brave Deeds*, by kind permission of Canon Rawnsley.)

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## OLD AUNT MARY'S.—Jas. Whitcomb Riley.

Wasn't it pleasant, O brother mine!—
In those old days of the lost sunshine
Of youth—when the Saturday's tasks were through,
And the 'Sunday's wood' in the kitchen, too,
And we went visiting, 'me and you,'
Out to old Aunt Mary's?

It all comes back so clear to-day!
Though I am as bald as you are gray—
Out by the barn-lot, and down the lane,
We patter along in the dust again,
As light as the tips of the drops of the rain,
Out to old Aunt Mary's!

We cross the pasture, and through the wood
Where the old gray snag of the poplar stood,
Where the hammering 'red-heads' hopped awry,
And the buzzard, 'raised' in the 'clearing,' sky,
And lolled and circled as we went by,
Out to old Aunt Mary's!

And then in the dust of the road again;
And the teams we met, and the countrymen;
And the long highway, with sunshine spread
As thick as butter on country bread.
Our cares behind, and our hearts ahead,
Out to old Aunt Mary's!

Why, I see her now in the open door,
Where the little gourds grew up the sides, and o'er
The clapboard roof! And her face—ah me!
Wasn't it good for a boy to see?
And wasn't it good for a boy to be
Out to old Aunt Mary's?

And O, my brother, so far away,
This is to tell you she waits to-day
To welcome us: Aunt Mary fell
Asleep this morning, whispering, 'Tell
The boys to come!' And all is well
Out to old Aunt Mary's.

(From *Old-fashioned Roses*, by kind permission of Messrs Longmans, Green, & Co.)

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## THE SELF-EXILED.—WALTER C. SMITH.

There came a soul to the gate of Heaven,
Gliding slow—
A soul that was ransomed and forgiven,
And white as snow;
And the angels all were silent.

A mystic light beamed from the face
Of the radiant maid;
But there also lay on its tender grace
A mystic shade;
And the angels all were silent.

As sunlit clouds by a zephyr borne
Seem not to stir,
So to the golden gates of morn
They carried her;
And the angels all were silent.

'Now open the gate and let her in,
And fling it wide,
For she has been cleansed from stain of sin,'
St Peter cried;
And the angels all were silent.

'Though I am cleansed from stain of sin,'
She answered low,
'I came not hither to enter in,
Nor may I go;'
And the angels all were silent.

'I come,' she said, to the pearly door,
To see the Throne
Where sits the Lamb on the sapphire floor,
With God alone;'
And the angels all were silent.

'But I may not enter there,' she said,
'For I must go
Across the gulf where the guilty dead
Lie in their woe;'
And the angels all were silent.

'If I enter Heaven I may not pass
To where they be,
Though the wail of their bitter pain, alas!
Tormenteth me;'
And the angels all were silent.

'If I enter Heaven I may not speak
My soul's desire
For them that are lying distraught and weak
In flaming fire;'
And the angels all were silent.

'I had a brother, and also another
Whom I loved well;

What if, in anguish, they curse each other
In the depths of hell?'
And the angels all were silent.

'How could I touch the golden harps,
When all my praise
Would be so wrought with grief-full warps
Of their sad days?'
And the angels all were silent.

'How love the loved who are sorrowing
And yet be glad?
How sing the songs ye are fain to sing
While I am sad?'
And the angels all were silent.

'Oh, clear as glass is the golden street
Of the City fair,
And the tree of life it maketh sweet
The lightsome air;'
And the angels all were silent.

'And the white-robed saints, with their crowns and their palms,
Are good to see;
And, oh, so grand are the sounding psalms!
But not for me;'
And the angels all were silent.

'I come where there is no night,' she said,
'To go away,
And help, if I yet may help, the dead
That have no day;'
And the angels all were silent.

St Peter he turned the keys about,
And answered grim:
'Can you love the Lord, and abide without
Afar from Him?'
And the angels all were silent.

'They go not out who come in here;
It were not meet:
Nothing they lack, for He is here,
And bliss complete;'
And the angels all were silent.

'Should I be nearer Christ,' she said,
'By pitying less
The sinful living or woeful dead
In their helplessness?'
And the angels all were silent.

'Should I be liker Christ were I
To love no more
The loved, who in their anguish lie
Outside the door?'
And the angels all were silent.

'Did He not hang on the cursèd tree,
And bear its shame,
And clasp to His heart, for love of me
My guilt and blame?'
And the angels all were silent.

'Should I be liker, nearer Him,
Forgetting this,
Singing all day with the Seraphim,
In selfish bliss?'
And the angels all were silent.

The Lord Himself stood by the gate,
And heard her speak
Those tender words compassionate
Gentle, and meek;
And the angels all were silent.

Now, pity is the touch of God
In human hearts,

And from that way He ever trod
He ne'er departs;
And the angels all were silent.

And He said, 'Now will I go with you,
Dear child of love;
I am weary of all this glory, too,
In Heaven above;'
And the angels all were silent.

'We will go seek and save the lost,
If they will hear;
They who are worst but need Me most,
And *all* are dear!'
And the angels were not silent.

(From *Hilda among the Broken Gods*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## A BALLAD OF HEAVEN.—JOHN DAVIDSON.

He wrought at one great work for years;
The world passed by with lofty look:
Sometimes his eyes were dashed with tears;
Sometimes his lips with laughter shook.

His wife and child went clothed in rags,
And in a windy garret starved;
He trod his measures on the flags,
And high on heaven his music carved.

Wistful he grew, but never feared;
For always on the midnight skies
His rich orchestral score appeared
In stars and zones and galaxies.

He thought to copy down his score;
The moonlight was his lamp: he said,
'Listen, my love;' but on the floor
His wife and child were lying dead.

Her hollow eyes were open wide;
He deemed she heard with special zest:
Her death's-head infant coldly eyed
The desert of her shrunken breast.

'Listen, my love: my work is done;
I tremble as I touch the page
To sign the sentence of the sun
And crown the great eternal age.

'The slow adagio begins;
The winding-sheets are ravelled out
That swathe the minds of men, the sins
That wrap their rotting souls about.

'The dead are heralded along:
With silver trumps and golden drums,
And flutes and oboes, keen and strong,
My brave andante singing comes.

'Then, like a python's sumptuous dress,
The frame of things is cast away,
And, out of Time's obscure distress,
The thundering scherzo crashes Day.

'For three great orchestras I hope
My mighty music shall be scored:
On three high hills they shall have scope
With heaven's vault for a sounding-board.

'Sleep well, love; let your eyelids fall;
Cover the child; good-night, and if . . .
What? Speak . . . the traitorous end of all!
Both . . . cold and hungry . . . cold and stiff!

'But no, God means us well, I trust:
Dear ones, be happy; hope is nigh:
We are too young to fall to dust,
And too unsatisfied to die.'

He lifted up against his breast
The woman's body stark and wan,
And to her withered bosom pressed
The little skin-clad skeleton.

'You see you are alive,' he cried.
He rocked them gently to and fro.
'No, no, my love, you have not died;
Nor you, my little fellow: no.'

Long in his arms he strained his dead,
And crooned an antique lullaby;
Then laid them on the lowly bed,
And broke down with a doleful cry.

'The love, the hope, the blood, the brain,
Of her and me, the budding life,
And my great music—all in vain!
My unscored work, my child, my wife!

'We drop into oblivion,
And nourish some suburban sod:
My work, this woman, this my son,
Are now no more: there is no God.

'The world's a dustbin; we are due,
And death's cart waits: be life accurst!'
He stumbled down beside the two,
And, clasping them, his great heart burst.

Straightway he stood at Heaven's gate,
Abashed and trembling for his sin:
I trow he had not long to wait,
For God came out and led him in.

And then there ran a radiant pair,
Ruddy with haste and eager-eyed,
To meet him first upon the stair—
His wife and child beatified.

They clad him in a robe of light,
And gave him heavenly food to eat;
Great seraphs praised him to the height,
Archangels sat about his feet.

God, smiling, took him by the hand,
And led him to the brink of Heaven:
He saw where systems whirling stand,
Where galaxies like snow are driven.

Dead silence reigned; a shudder ran
Through space; Time furled his wearied wings;
A slow adagio then began
Sweetly resolving troubled things.

The dead were heralded along:
As if with drums and trumps of flame,
And flutes and oboes, keen and strong,
A brave andante singing came.

Then, like a python's sumptuous dress,
The frame of things was cast away;
And, out of Time's obscure distress,
The conquering scherzo thundered Day.

He doubted; but God said, 'Even so;
Nothing is lost that 's wrought with tears:
The music that you made below
Is now the music of the spheres.'

(From *Ballads and Songs*, by kind permission of the author.)

## GOODWIN SANDS.—William Canton

Did you ever read or hear
How the *Aid*—(God bless the *Aid:*
More earnest prayer than that was never prayed)—
How the lifeboat *Aid* of Ramsgate saved the *London Fusilier*,
With a hundred souls on board—
With a hundred and a score?
She was fast on Goodwin Sands.
—(May the Lord
Have pity on all hands—
Crew and captain—when a ship's on Goodwin Sands!)

In the smother and the roar
Of a very hell of waters—hard and fast—
She shook beneath the stroke
Of each billow as it broke,
And the clouds of spray were mingled with the clouds of swirling smoke
As the blazing barrels bellowed in the blast!

And the women and the little ones were frozen dumb with fear;
And the strong men waited grimly for the last;
When—as clocks were striking two in Ramsgate town—
The little *Aid* came down;
The *Aid*, the plucky *Aid*—
The *Aid* flew down the gale
With the glimmer of the moon upon her sail;
And the people, thronged to leeward, stared and prayed—
Prayed and stared with tearless eye and breathless lip,
While the little boat drew near.
Ay, and then there rose a shout—
A clamour, half a sob and half a cheer—
As the boatmen flung the lifeboat anchor out,
And the gallant *Aid* sheered in beneath the ship,
Beneath the shadow of the *London Fusilier!*

'*We can carry maybe thirty at a trip*'
(Hurrah for Ramsgate town !).
'*Quick, the women and children !*'
O'er the side
Two sailors, slung in bowlines, hung to help the women down—
Poor women, shrinking back in their dismay
As they saw their ark of refuge, smothered up in spray,
Ranging wildly this and that way in the racing of the tide;
As they watched it rise and drop, with its crew of stalwart men,
When a huge sea swung it upward to the bulwarks of the ship,
And, sweeping by in thunder, sent it plunging down again.
Still they shipped them—nine-and-twenty. (God be blessed !)
When a man with glaring eyes
Rushed up frantic to the gangway with a cry choked in his throat—
Thrust a bundle in a sailor's ready hands.

Honest Jack, *he* understands—
Why, a blanket for a woman in a boat !
'*Catch it, Bill !*'
And he flung it with a will;
And the boatman turned and caught it, bless him !—caught it, though it slipped,
And, even as he caught it, heard an infant's cries,
While a woman shrieked, and snatched it to her breast—'My baby !'
*So* the thirtieth passenger was shipped !

Twice, and thrice, and yet again
Flew the lifeboat down the gale
With the moonlight on her sail—
With the sunrise on her sail—
(God bless the lifeboat *Aid* and all her men !)—
Brought her thirty at a trip
Through the hell of Goodwin waters as they raged around the ship,
Saved each soul aboard the *London Fusilier !*

If you live to be a hundred, you will ne'er—
You will ne'er in all your life,
Until you die, my dear,
Be nearer to your death by land or sea!

Was *she* there?
Who?—my wife?
Why, the baby in the blanket—that was she!

(From *W. V. Her Book*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## ANDY BYRNE.—FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

[Tim Delany, a small Munster-landlord, come over to England to sell cattle, is sitting in the public room of an inn in the market-town.]

Well, ye're afther cappin' stories, and, bedad, sirs, Whigs and Tories,
Aich wan still paints the Isle of Saints as Satan's isle all t'rough;
But I hould 'tis lasteways fittin' that ye all should be admittin'
That if the divle *has* his faults he's aqual virchooes too.

I was dhrivin' home wan night, sirs, whilst the oats was turnin' white, sirs,
Whin some wan stips across the wall, an' bids me stop the gig:
'Fine evenin', thin, but cowld, sir, an' might I make so bould, sir,
As ax if ye'd be plased at all to buy a darlin' pig?'

'Why, Andy, what's the rason at this same contrairy sason
Ye'd part the pig, so small an' all, an' niver a thing but lean?'
'Och, shure,' says he replyin', 'I've the misthress lyin' dyin',
An' ordered nourishmint, she is—an' that's the way I mean.'

Me hand was in my coat thin, an' I pulled him out a note thin.
'Me boy,' says I, 'to take the pig 'ud be the worst o' crimes.
Ye'll not refuse a lift thin—sure it shan't be called a gift thin;
'Tis lent, my frind, till God shall sind ould Ireland betther times.'

I gave the horse the whip so, an' gave the boy the slip so,
An' lookin' back along the track 'twas there I seen him stand;
Bedad, the fool was cryin', for his cuff his eyes was dhryin',
An' all the while he helt the note, like dhramin', in his hand.

Well, wan evenin' in Decimber, that 'tis like I 'll long remimber,
I 'd druv the mare to Kiltea fair, an' now I 'd raiched the turn.
There was half a moon to guide me, an' beyant the wall beside me
There rose a head all shagg'd an' red—the head of Andy Byrne.

I 'd me finger on the thrigger, but I rayalised the figger:
'Bedad, me lad, ye 'd nea'ly had a taste of lead this day!'
'Whist, whist,' says he; 'come near now—they 're waiting an ye here now—
Four barr'ls an' all—aich side the wall; raich home the other way.'

He vanished like a sprite, sirs, an'—was I wrong or right, sirs?—
I turned the horse, an' changed me course, an' july raiched me door;
An' whin all was nicely fixt, sirs, an' the glass o' punch was mixt, sirs,
The whole affair seemed just a scare—a dhrame, an' nothin' more.

Well, it might be two hours later, an' me hand was on the grater—
I take it so ye 'll have to know, wid limon just a squaze;—
I persaved a knockin' loud, sirs, an' the manials in a crowd sirs,—
'What 's all this row? be aisy now! yer manners, if ye plase.'

Och, bedad, 'twas soon I heard, sirs—an' bitther was the word, sirs—
''Tis Andy's wife'—'They 've took his life'—'He 's kilt, sir, t'rough and t'rough;'
''Tis for you that he 's inquirin''—'shure the crathur 's just expirin''—
'Och, wirra wirra, cruel day! whativer will I do?'

Thin out we turned togedder in the bitther murtherin' wedder—
The field across, an' o'er the moss, an' up to Andy's door;
Och, the white face, sharp and failin', an' the bits o' child'en wailin'—
A cruel sight we seen that night! God send the likes no more!

Well, we powered a dhrop o' brandy down the throat of poor ould Andy,
An' thin he sighed, and opened wide his blue eyes dim wid death;
So I propt his head to rest it, an' I saised his hand an' prest it;
'"Twas murtherin' kind to come,' says he, wid gaps betwixt for breath.

'Och, me boy,' says I, 'it kills me—'tis wid grief an' shame it fills me—
To think I saved me by yer word, an' left ye there to die;
Though ye wanst were just a pisant, ye're a marthyr shure at prisent—
Saint Pather meet ye at the gate, an' ax ye in on high.'

Thin says he, 'Don't give it mintion—shure it isn't worth attintion,
'Twas just a compliment—och! there!—the breath is hard to git;
Faith, ye helped me in disthriss, sir, an' ye saved my Molly—yis, sir—
'Tis more I 'd do, with freedom too, an' still not pay the dibt.'

Thin he lay back, tired wid' spakin'. Whin the morrer's morn was breakin'
He wint where daylight niver fades, an' lift the wife in night;
But, bedad! ye 're all mistaken if ye think that she 's forsaken:
Small want she 'll feel for fire an' meal while I 've the sup an' bite.

So whilst ye 're tellin' stories of ould Ireland's vanisht glories—
How Satan 's won the Isle of Saints, an' scattered all his foes—
Why, 'tis this I mane to say, sirs—let the divle have fair-play, sirs,
For if his skin is black as sin, less need to cork his nose.

(From *Sent Back by the Angels* (Cassell), by kind permission of the author.)

# THE DRAMA OF THE DOCTOR'S WINDOW.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

IN THREE ACTS, WITH A PROLOGUE.

A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.
*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

## PROLOGUE.

'Well, I must wait!' The Doctor's room,
Where I used this expression,
Wore the severe official gloom
Attached to that profession;
Rendered severer by a bald
And skinless Gladiator,
Whose raw robustness first appalled
The entering spectator.

No one would call *The Lancet* gay;
Few could avoid confessing
That Jones *On Muscular Decay*
Is, as a rule, depressing:
So, leaving both, to change the scene,
I turned towards the shutter,
And peered out vacantly between
A water-butt and gutter.

Below, the Doctor's garden lay,
If thus imagination
May dignify a square of clay,
Unused to vegetation,
Filled with a dismal-looking swing
That brought to mind a gallows,
An empty kennel, mouldering,
And two dyspeptic aloes.

No sparrow chirped, no daisy sprung,
About the place deserted;
Only across the swing-board hung
A battered doll, inverted,
Which sadly seemed to disconcert
The vagrant cat that scanned it,
Sniffed doubtfully around the skirt,
But failed to understand it.

A dreary spot! And yet, I own—
Half-hoping that, perchance, it
Might, in some unknown way, atone
For Jones and for *The Lancet*—
I watched; and, by especial grace,
Within this stage contracted,
Saw presently before my face
A classic story acted.

Ah, World of ours, are you so gray
And weary, World, of spinning,
That you repeat the tales to-day
You told at the beginning?
For lo! the same old myths that made
The early 'stage successes'
Still 'hold the boards,' and still are played
'With new effects and dresses.'

Small, lonely 'three-pair-backs' behold,
To-day, Alcestis dying;
To-day, in farthest Polar cold,
Ulysses' bones are lying;
Still in one's morning *Times* one reads
How fell an Indian Hector;
Still clubs discuss Achilles' steeds,
Briseis' next protector;

Still Menelaus brings, we see,
His oft-reminded case on;
Still somewhere sad Hypsipyle
Bewails a faithless Jason;

And here, the Doctor's sill beside,
Do I not now discover
A Thisbe, whom the walls divide
From Pyramus, her lover?

## Act the First.

Act I. began. Some noise had scared
The cat, that like an arrow
Shot up the wall and disappeared;
And then, across the narrow,
Unweeded path, a small dark thing,
Hid by a garden-bonnet,
Passed wearily towards the swing,
Paused, turned, and climbed upon it.

A child of five, with eyes that were
At least a decade older,
A mournful mouth, and tangled hair
Flung careless round her shoulder,
Dressed in a stiff, ill-fitting frock,
Whose black, uncomely rigour
Sardonically seemed to mock
The plaintive, slender figure.

What was it? Something in the dress
That told the girl unmothered:
Or was it that the merciless
Black garb of mourning smothered
Life and all light? But rocking so,
In the dull garden-corner,
The lonely swinger seemed to grow
More piteous and forlorner.

Then, as I looked, across the wall
Of 'next door's' garden, that is—
To speak correctly—through its tall
Surmounting fence of lattice,

Peeped a boy's face, with curling hair,
Ripe lips, half-drawn asunder,
And round, bright eyes, that wore a stare
Of frankest childish wonder.

Rounder they grew by slow degrees,
Until the swinger, swerving,
Made, all at once, alive to these
Intentest orbs observing,
Gave just one brief, half-uttered cry,
And—as, with gathered kirtle,
Nymphs fly from Pan's head suddenly
Thrust through the budding myrtle—

Fled in dismay. A moment's space,
The eyes looked almost tragic;
Then, when they caught my watching face,
Vanished as if by magic.
And, like some sombre thing beguiled
To strange, unwonted laughter,
The gloomy garden, having smiled,
Became the gloomier after.

ACT THE SECOND.

Yes: they were gone, the stage was bare—
Blank as before; and therefore,
Sinking within the patient's chair,
Half-vexed, I knew not wherefore,
I dozed; till, startled by some call,
A glance sufficed to show me
The boy again above the wall,
The girl erect below me.

The boy, it seemed, to add a force
To words found unavailing,
Had pushed a striped and spotted horse
Half-through the blistered paling,

Where now it stuck, stiff-legged and straight,
  While he, in exultation,
Chattered some half-articulate
  Excited explanation.

Meanwhile the girl, with upturned face,
  Stood motionless, and listened;
The ill-cut frock had gained a grace,
  The pale hair almost glistened;
The figure looked alert and bright,
  Buoyant as though some power
Had lifted it, as rain at night
  Uplifts a drooping flower.

The eyes had lost their listless way;
  The old life, tired and faded,
Had slipped down with the doll that lay
  Before her feet, degraded;
She only, yearning upward, found
  In those bright eyes above her
The ghost of some enchanted ground
  Where even Nurse would love her.

Ah, tyrant Time! you hold the book,
  We, sick and sad, begin it;
You close it fast, if we but look
  Pleased for a meagre minute.
You closed it now, for, out of sight,
  Some warning figure beckoned;
*Exeunt* both to left and right:
  Thus ended Act the Second.

## Act the Third.

Or so it proved. For while I still
  Believed them gone for ever,
Half-raised above the window-sill,
  I saw the lattice quiver;

And lo! once more appeared the head,
Flushed, while the round mouth pouted;
'Give Tom a kiss,' the red lips said,
In style the most undoubted.

The girl came back without a thought;
Dear Muse of Mayfair, pardon,
If more restraint had not been taught
In this neglected garden.
For these your code was all too stiff;
So, seeing none dissented,
Their unfeigned faces met as if
Manners were not invented.

Then on the scene—by happy fate,
When lip from lip had parted,
And, therefore, just two seconds late—
A sharp-faced nurse-maid darted;
Swooped on the boy, as swoops a kite
Upon a rover chicken,
And bore him sourly off, despite
His well-directed kicking.

The girl stood silent, with a look
Too subtle to unravel,
Then with a sudden gesture took
The torn doll from the gravel;
Hid the whole face, with one caress,
Under the garden-bonnet,
And, passing in, I saw her press
Kiss after kiss upon it.

---

*Exeunt omnes.* End of play.
It made the dull room brighter,
The Gladiator almost gay,
And e'en *The Lancet* lighter.

(From *Old World Idylls*, by kind permission of the author.)

## OUR TRAVELLED PARSON.—W. CARLETON.

For twenty years and over our good parson had been toiling
To chip the bad meat from our hearts, and keep the good from spoiling;
But finally he wilted down, and went to looking sickly,
And the doctor said that something must be put up for him quickly.
So we kind of clubbed together, each according to his notion,
And bought a circular ticket for the lands across the ocean;
Wrapped some pocket-money in it—what we thought would easy do him—
And appointed me committee-man to go and take it to him.
I found him in his study, looking rather worse than ever,
And told him 'twas decided that his flock and he should sever.
Then his eyes grew wide with wonder, and it seemed almost to blind 'em,
And some tears looked out o' window, with some others close behind 'em.
Then I handed him the ticket, with a little bow of deference,
And he studied quite a little ere he got its proper reference;
And then the tears that waited, great unmanageable creatures,
Let themselves quite out o' window, and came climbing down his features.
I wish you could have seen him, coming back all fresh and glowing,
His clothes so worn and seedy, and his face so fat and knowing;
I wish you could have heard him when he prayed for us who sent him,
And paid us back twice over all the money we had lent him.
'Twas a feast to all believers, 'twas a blight on contradiction,
To hear one just from Calvary talk about the Crucifixion;
'Twas a damper on those fellows who pretended they could doubt it,
To have a man who 'd been there stand and tell them all about it.
Paul, maybe, beat our pastor in the Bible knots unravelling,
And establishing new churches, but he couldn't touch him travelling,
Nor in his journeys pick up half the general information;
But then he hadn't railroads and the steamboat navigation.

And every foot of Scripture whose location used to stump us
Was now regularly laid out, with the different points of compass.
When he undertook a picture he quite natural would draw it;
He would paint it out so honest that it seemed as if you saw it.
And the way he chiselled Europe—oh, the way he scampered through it!
Not a mountain dodged his climbing, not a city but he knew it;
There wasn't any subject to explain in all creation,
But he could go to Europe and bring back an illustration.
So we crowded out to hear him quite instructed and delighted;
'Twas a picture show, a lecture, and a sermon—all united;
And my wife would rub her glasses, and serenely pet her Test'ment,
And whisper, 'That 'ere ticket was a splendid good investment.'
Now, after six months' travel, we was most of us quite ready
To settle down a little, so 's to live more staid and steady;
To develop home resources, with no foreign cares to fret us,
Using home-made faith more frequent; but the parson wouldn't let us.
To view the self-same scenery time and time again he 'd call us,
Over rivers, plains, and mountains he would any minute haul us;
He slighted our home sorrows, and our spirit's aches and ailings,
To get the cargoes ready for his reg'lar Sunday sailings.
He would take us off a-touring in all spiritual weather,
Till we at last got home-sick like, and sea-sick altogether;
And 'I wish to all that 's peaceful,' said one free-expressioned brother,
'That the Lord had made one cont'nent, and then never made another!'
Sometimes, indeed, he 'd take us into sweet, familiar places,
And pull along quite steady in the good old gospel traces;
But soon my wife would shudder, just as if a chill had caught her,
Whispering, 'Oh, my goodness gracious! he 's a-takin' to the water!'
And it wasn't the same old comfort when he called around to see us;
On a branch of foreign travel he was sure at last to tree us;
All unconscious of his error, he would sweetly patronise us,
And with oft-repeated stories still endeavour to surprise us.

And the sinners got to laughing; and that fin'lly galled and stung us
To ask him, would he kindly once more settle down among us?
Didn't he think that more home produce would improve our souls' digestions?
They appointed me committee-man to go and ask the questions.
I found him in his garden, trim an' buoyant as a feather;
He pressed my hand, exclaiming, 'This is quite Italian weather.
How it minds me of the evenings when, your distant hearts caressing,
Upon my benefactors I invoked the heavenly blessing!'
I went and told the brothers, 'No, I cannot bear to grieve him;
He's so happy in his exile, it's the proper place to leave him.
I took that journey to him, and right bitterly I rue it;
But I cannot take it from him; if you want to, go and do it.'
Now a new restraint entirely seemed next Sunday to enfold him,
And he looked so hurt and humbled that I knew some one had told him.
Subdued-like was his manner, and some tones were hardly vocal;
But every word he uttered was pre-eminently local.
The sermon sounded awkward, and we awkward felt who heard it;
'Twas a grief to see him hedge it, 'twas a pain to hear him word it.
'When I was in'—was, maybe, half-a-dozen times repeated,
But the sentence seemed to scare him, and was always uncompleted.
As weeks went on, his old smile would occasionally brighten,
But the voice was growing feeble, and the face began to whiten;
He would look off to the eastward with a listful, weary sighing;
And 'twas whispered that our pastor in a foreign land was dying.
The coffin lay 'mid garlands smiling sad as if they knew us;
The patient face within it preached a final sermon to us;
Our parson had gone touring on a trip he'd long been earning,
In a wonderland whence tickets are not issued for returning.

. . . . . .

O tender, good-heart shepherd! your sweet, smiling lips, half-parted,
Told of scenery that burst on you just the minute that you started!
Could you preach once more among us, you might wander without fearing,
You could give us tales of glory we would never tire of hearing.

## A SONG OF THE WHEEL.—Ednah Proctor Clarke.

1798.

Spin !—spin !
Where glimmers the fire-fly's errant torch
In the twilight hush of the rose-hung porch—
Spin !—spin !
And the carven spokes of her whirring wheel
Answer the thrill her pulses feel—
The fear that is joy, the joy that is fear,
As he leans beside her, near, more near—
Spin !—spin !
To keep back the joy, so old, so new,
Fast through the twilight, fast through the dew—
Spin !—spin !
(*So doth the song of Love begin.*)

Paint you the picture—shall I try?
The down-drooped glance, so warm, so shy,
And the lifting heart 'neath the kerchief's fold,
And the little white hands that the white wool hold;
The satiny hair with the high comb's crown,
The clasping bodice, the big-flowered gown,
The petticoat's lace and the buckled shoe—
Ah !—what is a man to do?
(For the little blind god on the distaff sits !)
What, but gather his scattered wits
And lean to her nearer, and plead until
The treadle stops, and the wheel is still.

1898.

Spin !—spin !
O'er the flinty road till the small lamps seem
A fire-fly flash through the twilight gleam—
Spin !—spin !

And the glittering spokes of her flying wheel
Answer the thrill her pulses feel—
The fear that is joy, the joy that is fear,
As he speeds beside her, near, more near—
Spin !—spin !
To keep back the joy, so old, so new,
Fast through the twilight, fast through the dew—
Spin !—spin !
(*So doth the song of Love begin.*)

Paint you the picture if I can ?
The face, with its sun-kissed rose and tan ;
With the joy of life and the outdoor glee,
And the wayward curl that the wind blows free ;
The little cocked hat and the stiffened shirt,
The saucy jacket and shortened skirt,
The roguish gaiter, the russet shoe—
Ah !—what is a man to do ?
(For the little blind god on the handle sits !)
What, but gather his scattered wits
And follow her faster, and plead until
The pedals stop, and the wheel is still.

*L'envoi.*

'Neath filmy kerchief, 'neath bristling starch,
Lies the heart of the Woman, sweet and arch ;
And, whatever her foibles, old or new,
Still will she beckon and Man pursue.
And the old World turns on its circling way,
And the old Fates spin in the twilight gray ;
And over what wheel their strange strands run,
Still the thread of Youth and Love is spun.

## THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES.

AN INCIDENT OF THE FLOOD IN MASSACHUSETTS, MAY 16, 1874.

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

No song of a soldier riding down
To the raging fight of Winchester town;
No song of a time that shook the earth
With the nation's throe at a nation's birth;
But the song of a brave man, free from fear
As Sheridan's self or Paul Revere;
Who risked what they risked—free from strife
And its promise of glorious pay—his life.

The peaceful valley has waked and stirred,
And the answering echoes of life are heard;
The dew still clings to the trees and grass,
And the earlier toilers smiling pass,
As they glance aside at the white-walled homes,
Or up the valley where merrily comes
The brook that sparkles in diamond rills
As the sun comes over the Hampshire hills.

What was it that passed like an ominous breath?
Like a shiver of fear or a touch of death?
What was it? The valley is peaceful still,
And the leaves are afire on the top of the hill;
It was not a sound, nor a thing of sense—
But a pain, like a pang in the short suspense
That wraps the being of those who see
At their feet the gulf of eternity.

The air of the valley has felt the chill;
The workers pause at the door of the mill;
The housewife, keen to the shivering air,
Arrests her foot on the cottage stair,
Instinctive taught by the mother-love,
And thinks of the sleeping ones above.

Why start the listeners? Why does the course
Of the mill-stream widen? Is it a horse—
'Hark to the sound of his hoofs,' they say—
That gallops so wildly Williamsburg way?

God! What was that, like a human shriek,
From the winding valley? Will nobody speak;
Will nobody answer those women who cry
As the awful warnings thunder by?

Whence come they? Listen! And now they hear
The sound of the galloping horse-hoofs near;
They watch the trend of the vale, and see
The rider, who thunders so menacingly,
With waving arms and warning scream
To the home-filled banks of the valley stream.
He draws no rein, but he shakes the street
With a shout and the ring of the galloping feet,
And this the cry that he flings to the wind:
'*To the hills for your lives! The flood is behind!*'

He cries and is gone; but they know the worst—
The treacherous Williamsburg dam has burst!
The basin that nourished their happy homes
Is changed to a demon—it comes! it comes!
A monster in aspect, with shaggy front
Of shattered dwellings to take the brunt
Of the dwellings they shatter—white-maned and hoarse,
The merciless terror fills the course
Of the narrow valley, and rushing raves,
With death on the first of its hissing waves,
Till cottage and street and crowded mill
Are crumbled and crushed. But onward still,
In front of the roaring flood is heard
The galloping horse and the warning word.
Thank God that the brave man's life is spared!
From Williamsburg town he nobly dared

To race with the flood and to take the road
In front of the terrible swath it mowed.
For miles it thundered and crashed behind,
But he looked ahead with a steadfast mind:
'*They must be warned!*' was all he said,
As away on his terrible ride he sped.

When heroes are called for, bring the crown
To this Yankee rider; send him down
On the stream of time with the Curtius old:
His deed, as the Roman's, was brave and bold.
And the tale can as noble a thrill awake,
For he offered his life for the people's sake.

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## THE KING'S LAST VIGIL.—Lady Lindsay.

The autumn mists upon the land
  Were grayly sad, low-lying;
And down the vale the people's moan,
  Like wind through reeds, was sighing,
For in his marble palace hall
  Their great king lay a-dying.

Wise had he been and long of reign;
  Beneath his worthy sway
The country which he ruled was blest,
  More prosperous day by day;
The very slaves grew glad—but now
  The king a-dying lay.

About his silken canopy
  The courtiers closely press'd,
And grizzled comrades, who, full oft,
  Had met the foe at breast
Led on by him, now sobbed unshamed
  As weakly as the rest.

Yet spake he nought. He turned his face
Toward the darkening wall.
Pain lulled, but one sharp-bladed thought
Held heart and soul in thrall;
His quivering senses sank, and fear
Closed o'er him like a pall.

What! had he met grim Death in field,
Times countless, undismayed,
And thrown the gauntlet of hot youth,
Now for old age, afraid,
To shrink back shuddering like a child
That 's frightened of a shade?

At length he bade all leave him. Ne'er
Could he a rebel brook;
Dead was he scarce; this was his will—
To be by all forsook.
Each sadly went, but, as he pass'd,
Gazed back with loving look.

Then did the lone king, as a sword,
Take up in failing hand
The strength that once was his, which now
Dropt from his grasp like sand;
Alone he wrestled with gaunt fear,
By that fear still unmann'd.

He sank back on his agate couch,
His brows cold, wan, and wet.
No help was nigh, and he, by Death
More cruelly beset,
For quarter cried no more, but lay
Quite still, and fainter yet.

Silent the room was, drear, and chill,
With twilight filling fast,

But on a sudden that great fear
From the king's soul quick pass'd;
'Twas as a garment which his soul
From its nude form had cast.

A presence stood beside his bed,
A presence of sweet birth:
Our Lord the Christ—in robes of white,
As when He walked the earth—
Whose smile divine holds Life and Death,
Alike, of transient worth.

Then mildly Christ spake: 'Follow Me,'
And silent rose the king,
And, without fear, left bed and hall,
And passed out marvelling.
The busy streets were crowded full—
It seemed a wondrous thing.

Beyond the palace, down the hill,
And out the city gate
(Strange that no man should bar the way
With speech importunate!)
The church-bells softly tolled the while.
The Lord for naught did wait.

On went the shining Figure, on
By sentries unobserved;
So eke the king, with hasting step
And strength that never swerved.
Familiar lay the road—straight marked,
And line of forest curved.

Behind them paled the frowning walls,
The very town grew dim;
Still He that led the way kept on,
The other followed Him;
At length they reached an unknown space,
A broad green meadow's rim.

There in the mead among the grass
  Most lovely flowers grew,
Beauteous in shape, in perfume steep'd,
  Transcendent fair of hue;
There amaranth and asphodel
  In deathless garland blew.

There stayed the Lord, and said and smiled:
  'These flow'rs that thou dost see,
Each is an action good or kind,
  My servant, done for Me,
While thou for a short space on earth
  Wast chosen king to be.'

But, as the king looked, bursting tears
  From his worn eyes down ran,
And deep emotion shook his heart.
  Alas! in mortal span,
How less had he achieved of good
  Than any other man!

Yet bent the Lord, and gently pluck'd
  From mossy green retreat
One tiny blossom hid by leaves,
  One blossom at His feet,
And in His bosom placed He it—
  That blossom pure and sweet.

Whilst, one by one, the meek king knew
  His deeds of bygone days;
Some, now least fair, which earned of yore
  Loud songs of fulsome praise;
Some which no pæans graced, unshrined,
  Bright now as sunlight rays;

And, most of all divinely blest
  The Christ's touch to have won,
Yon flower, a puny secret act,
  Guessed, chronicled by none!

Well he recalled how hard the fight,
For right's sake, had been done!

So great a fight, so small a thing!
He cast him on his knees,
Shamed that it were such sacrifice
The dear Lord Christ to please,
And grievous tears which blurred his sight
Hid the sweet flowers and leas.

The figure of his Lord grew dim:
He would have clasped it fain.
He stretched his hands, and groped, and sought,
But stretched them all in vain:
The fields were empty, and he cried
With an exceeding pain.

But lo! a mystic voice uprose
Out from the windless west:
'My son, if one poor act of thine
Before thy God be blest,
Surely this trembling faith thou own'st
On His great strength may rest.'

So stood the king, glad-browed. All fear
Lost in new joy, he gazed
Above, for dawn was breaking clear,
And blinding mists were raised.
With yearning lips deliverèd,
The Lord's high name he praised,

And, turning, saw where far behind—
A huge cloud, fold on fold—
Lay the gloomy vale of the shades of Death
With its rivers around it rolled.
Before him blossomed the heavenly plain,
In glory of pearl and gold.

(By kind permission of the author.)

## THE GIFT OF TRITEMIUS.—JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

Tritemius of Herbipolis, one day,
While kneeling at the altar's foot to pray,
Alone with God, as was his pious choice,
Heard from without a miserable voice,
A sound which seemed of all sad things to tell,
As of a lost soul crying out of hell.
Thereat the Abbot paused; the chain whereby
His thoughts went upward broken by that cry;
And, looking from the casement, saw below
A wretched woman, with gray hair aflow,
And withered hands held up to him, who cried
For alms as one who might not be denied.

She cried, 'For the dear love of Him who gave
His life for ours, my child from bondage save,
My beautiful, brave first-born, chained with slaves
In the Moor's galley, where the sun-smit waves
Lap the white walls of Tunis!' 'What I can
I give,' Tritemius said: 'my prayers.' 'O man
Of God!' she cried, for grief had made her bold,
'Mock me not thus; I ask not prayers, but gold.
Words will not serve me, alms alone suffice;
Even while I speak perchance my first-born dies.'

'Woman!' Tritemius answered, 'from our door
None go unfed; hence are we always poor;
A single soldo is our only store.
Thou hast our prayers; what can we give thee more?'

'Give me,' she said, 'the silver candlesticks
On either side of the great crucifix—
God well may spare them on His errands sped,
Or He can give you golden ones instead.'

Then spake Tritemius: 'Even as thy word,
Woman, so be it! (Our most gracious Lord,
Who loveth mercy more than sacrifice,
Pardon me if a human soul I prize
Above the gifts upon His altar piled!)
Take what thou askest, and redeem thy child.'

But his hand trembled as the holy alms
He placed within the beggar's eager palms;
And as she vanished down the linden shade,
He bowed his head and for forgiveness prayed.

So the day passed, and when the twilight came
He woke to find the chapel all aflame,
And, dumb with grateful wonder, to behold
Upon the altar candlesticks of gold!

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## THE BALLAD OF LADY ELLEN.—Emily Hickey.

'Say, what ails you, daughter mine?
The flowers are springing fair and fine;

'Never a cloud in the sky so blue;
And the whole big world is glad but you.

'Call your page, and bid him bring
Your fair white horse, the gift of the king;

'Light as a bird that flies the air,
He 'll bear you away from your brooding care.'

'Nay, I prithee, father, nay;
I will not ride my horse to-day.'

'Summon hither your bower-lady
With the voice as sweet as voice can be;

'And when she sings her goodly song,
Your trouble will not tarry long.'

'Nay, my sire, no song for me:
I will not hear the sounds of glee.

'Aye and ever I hear them cry,
My kith-folk in their misery.'

'Daughter, you cannot see the poor;
They are banned and barred from your father's door.

'How should you know their wants and woes?'
'My soul hath eyes, and I see with those.'

'Daughter, to-night shall a feast be spread,
Where the king's son shall be banqueted;

'High on the dais shall be your seat,
As for mine only heir is meet.

'Your maids must busk you royal fair,
With a golden circlet round your hair;

'And a stately robe of cramoisie,
Set with the fine lace daintily.

'Bid your ladies bring for you
The scented glove and the broidered shoe;

'Let fiery-hearted rubies deck
Your rosed-white ears and lilied neck.

'And lest too bright your beauty shine,
Fling over all, fair daughter mine,

'A wimple of golden tissue free,
A faery mist from head to knee.'

'O father, what have I to do
With scented glove and broidered shoe?

'Lovely robe and precious gem,
What have I to do with them?

'All I had I have sold to give
Wherewith to bid the people live.

'How can I flaunt in rich array,
When the people sit in rags to-day?

'How can I taste of dainty meat,
When the people have not what to eat?

'Father, father, fair to own
Are the lands your father's fathers won;

'And the castle girt with the broad, deep moat,
Where a war-famed banner high doth float;

'And goodly fair, indeed, to see
Are piles of the red and the white money.

'But castle and lands and fee are nought
To the worth of the souls the Saviour bought.

'The black-winged famine, day by day,
Swoops on their lives like a bird of prey,

'And the people know they are but dead
For lack of needful flesh and bread.

'Father, take of your golden store,
And give it to the starving poor.

'I pray you in the dear Lord's name
To help the souls for whom He came.'

He laughed a scornful laugh and long—
'I care not for the folk a song!

'And if you will not grace my board,
I care not, daughter, by the Lord!

'The king's son shall be my heir,
Instead of you, my daughter fair.'

Lady Ellen kneeled and steept
The hard floor with the tears she wept:

But harder than the marble stone
Is the human heart to hardness grown.

'Myself will go,' the lady said,
'And see how they die for lack of bread.

'I who have lived at joyous ease,
Would to God I might die for these.'

Low she spake to her bower-lady,
Whose heart was gentle as heart can be;

And the two went out from the castle gate,
Dight like women of low estate.

They went through the city side by side,
And saw themselves how the people died.

And they saw a thing more dread to see
Than curse of famine and drought could be:

And they heard a thing more dread to hear
Than toll of a death-bell on the ear.

Oh! the dearth was raging stark and sore
From the eastern to the western shore;

And the Duke that owned the wide country
Never a moment's care gave he:

But the Prince of Hell was 'ware, and sent
His powers to bring him great content.

They sit in a room of a hostel there,
Two swart men with raven hair.

Day by day, with keen hawk-eye,
They watch the people's misery.

Strange dark men who understand
Right well the language of the land.

Trippingly that language goes
Upon the lissom tongues of those.

Gold in heaps they are counting o'er,
And the hostess marvels at the store.

'O fair sirs,' the people cry
Day by day in their misery.

'O fair sirs, but hear their prayer;
Gold enow ye have, and to spare.'

'Nay, good hostess, bid them come,
Each alone, to this our room.

'All that will may have, be sure,
Gold enow their ills to cure.'

The poor come to the hostelry,
And enter where the strangers be;

Enter a high room carven fair;
A room that was once a king's chamber.

One by one they leave the place,
With a dreadful change on every face.

For those were the devil's emissaries,
Who dealt in souls for merchandise.

Little they gave for the worn and old,
But for the young they gave much gold.

And to all the folk that there did come
They said they would give a king's ransom

For a virgin soul of purity,
In a virgin body fair to see.

Oh! this was the thing the lady learned,
Before her footsteps home were turned.

This was the thing more dread to see
Than curse of famine or drought could be.

This was the thing more dread to hear
Than toll of a death-bell on the ear.

Back from the city the lady came,
Pierced to the heart with sorrow and shame.

Back she came in her wordless woe,
That would not suffer a tear to flow.

She went, in sackcloth garmented,
With Lenten ashes upon her head,

And came to her father's princely seat,
And knelt in her anguish at his feet.

'What mean you, maid, to put to shame
Your father's house and your father's name,

'That you come in sackcloth garmented.
With the dust of Lent upon your head?'

Tears of blood were the words she spoke,
'Father, father, save the folk!'

He looked on her in his anger grim,
As low she bowed herself to him:

And spake at last in his bitter jest,
'To sell your own white soul were best!

'Your lily-soul, bedewed with prayers,
Is worth a world of such as theirs!'

All night long the lady prayed;
'Slay me, O God, for these,' she said.

For the flame at the ruby's heart that burns
Is nought to the fire in the soul that yearns

To save a soul in its jeopardy,
Or perish instead, if so may be.

And when the sun was risen again,
She went alone to the evil men.

'What will ye give me for a dole,
If I render you up my soul?'

'Oh, we will give thee what thou wilt
For the goodliest soul that ever was spilt.'

They dealt her out the price she would,
And she signed her name to the bond in blood.

She gave to the poor, and loud they swore
To deal with the evil men no more.

And then the lady sent a quest
To the corn-lands of the far-off West,

For freighted ships of golden corn
Across the wide sea to be borne.

The corn was worth its weight in gold,
Which the western folk to the lady sold.

They said, when fourteen days were o'er,
The corn would come to the waiting shore.

Corn for bread, and corn for seed;
Corn enow for the people's need.

None should trade with the Evil One
Till the fourteen days were past and gone,

Because of the gold that free did come
By the Lady Ellen's martyrdom.

The Lady Ellen looked afar
Out toward the land of the western star,

As she sat in her chamber day by day,
Her eyes on the wide sea far away ;

Until at last she saw them come,
The fair white ships of her love's ransom.

Down she fell on her bended knee
When the sails at last her eyes could see :

'Now, when they will, they e'en may take
My soul that 's lost for my people's sake.'

She bade that none should come to her ;
And she drew the bolts of her high chamber ;

And no one knew, save God alone,
What anguish and woe to her were known,

Till her body no more could bear the stress
Of her soul's exceeding bitterness.

But never she swerved from the path of love
To the heart of Hell and the fires thereof.

Into the harbour the vessels rode,
Laden each with a costly load.

And the black-winged famine flew away
For the food and the seed that came that day.

They hounded forth the evil men,
Never to come to the land again.

And strength came back once more to the weak,
And the parched mouths for joy could speak.

They went in throngs to praise and pray
At the place where Lady Ellen lay.

But Lady Ellen, who loved them so,
Was gone from the sound of their weal or woe.

They burst the bolts of her chamber door,
And found her stark-dead on the floor.

The body that erst was fair to see
Was the writhen spoil of her agony:

And dark on the face the woe was sealed
Of the death unhouselled, unannealed.

The soul so pure and charitable
Fared alone to the gates of Hell,

Naked made of its body's dress;
Clad in its great love's loveliness.

Open the gates, and let her win
To the flame and the awe and the pain therein!

Right to the heart of Hell she fared,
All unharmed and all unscared,

She to whose unpolluted sight
The flame was glory, the darkness light.

Sounds of wailing to other ears—
To hers the music of all the spheres,

That drew to the empyrean bliss
Where the mystic Rose of the Blessed is

Abloom by the lake reflected bright
From the very Uncreated Light.

Oh! far apart are east and west,
And far apart are toil and rest,

And far apart are morn and even,
And far apart are Hell and Heaven;

And of Heaven above or Hell below
Where is the man who thinks to know?

Yet the soul that Love makes strong to dare
The heart of Hell finds Heaven is there.

Oh, a new light dawned in Mary's eyes
When the soul came into Paradise;

For on her the Lord had laid behest
To bring that soul to the sweetest rest.

Up she rose from her high queen-seat,
With the sheen of the blessed on her feet;

Drew to the soul that entered there,
And laid it upon her bosom fair:

Even the soul where God did see
The very self of Charity.

'Christ the Lord hath brought to His bliss
Thee, whose love was a love like His:

'Darling of JESUS, lie to-day
Here in the bosom where JESUS lay.'

(From *Poems by Emily Hickey*, by kind permission of the author.)

## THE OPEN STEEPLECHASE.—A. B. PATERSON.

I had ridden over hurdles up the country once or twice,
By the side of Snowy River, with a horse they called The Ace;
And we brought him down to Sydney, and our rider, Jimmy Rice,
Got a fall and broke his shoulder, so they nabbed me in a trice—
Me, that never wore the colours—for the Open Steeplechase.

'Make the running,' said the trainer; 'it 's your only chance whatever;
Make it hot from start to finish, for the old black horse can stay;
And just think of how they 'll take it when they hear on Snowy River
That the country boy was plucky and the country horse was clever.
You must ride for old Monaro and the mountain boys to-day.'

'Are you ready?' said the starter, as we held the horses back,
All ablazing with impatience, with excitement all aglow;
Before us like a ribbon stretched the steeplechasing track,
And the sun-rays glistened brightly on the chestnut and the black
As the starter's words came slowly, 'Are—you—ready? Go!'

Well, I scarcely knew we 'd started—I was stupid-like with wonder—
Till the field closed up beside me and a jump appeared ahead.
And we flew it like a hurdle, not a baulk and not a blunder,
As we charged it all together, and it fairly whistled under,
And then some were pulled behind me and a few shot out and led.

So we ran for half the distance, and I 'm making no pretences
When I tell you I was feeling very nervous-like and queer,
For those jockeys rode like demons; you would think they 'd lost their senses
If you saw them rush their horses at those rasping five-foot fences—
And in place of making running I was falling to the rear.

Till a chap came racing past me on a horse they called The Quiver,
And said he, 'My country joker, are you going to give it best?
Are you frightened of the fences? Does their stoutness make you shiver?
Have they come to breeding cowards by the side of Snowy River?
Are there riders on Monaro?'—— But I never heard the rest.

For I drove The Ace and sent him, just as fast as he could pace it,
At the big black line of timber stretching fair across the track,
And he shot beside The Quiver. 'Now,' said I, 'my boy, we'll race it.
You can come with Snowy River if you're only game to face it;
Let us mend the pace a little and we'll see who cries a crack.'

So we raced away together, and we left the others standing,
And the people cheered and shouted as we settled down to ride,
And we clung beside The Quiver. At his taking off and landing
I could see his scarlet nostril and his mighty ribs expanding,
And The Ace stretched out in earnest, and we held him stride for stride.

But the pace was so terrific that they soon ran out their tether;
They were rolling in their gallop, they were fairly blown and beat;
But they both were game as pebbles—neither one would show the feather,
And we rushed them at the fences, and they cleared them both together;
Nearly every time they clouted, but they somehow kept their feet.

Then the last jump rose before us, and they faced it game as ever—
We were both at spur and whipcord fetching blood at every bound;
And above the people's cheering, and the cries of 'Ace' and 'Quiver,'
I could hear the trainer shouting, 'One more run for Snowy River.'
Then we struck the jump together, and came smashing to the ground.

Well, The Quiver ran to blazes, but The Ace stood still and waited—
Stood and waited like a statue while I scrambled on his back.
There was no one next or near me, for the field was fairly slated,
So I cantered home a winner with my shoulder dislocated,
While the man that rode The Quiver followed limping down the track.

And he shook my hand and told me that in all his days he never
Met a man who rode more gamely, and our last set-to was prime.
And we wired them on Monaro how we chanced to beat The Quiver;
And they sent us back an answer: 'Good old sort from Snowy River;
Send us word each race you start in, and we 'll back you every time.'

(From *The Man from Snowy River*, by kind permission of Messrs Angus & Robertson, Sydney.)

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## SHE AND I.—James Berry Bensel.

And I said, 'She is dead; I could not brook
Again on that marvellous face to look.'

But they took my hand and they led me in,
And left me alone with my nearest kin.

Once again alone in that silent place,
My beautiful dead and I face to face.

And I could not speak, and I could not stir,
But I stood, and with love I looked on her.

With love and with rapture and strange surprise
I looked on the lips and the close-shut eyes;

On the perfect rest and the calm content
And the happiness in her features blent,

And the thin white hands that had wrought so much,
Now nerveless to kisses or fevered touch—

My beautiful dead who had known the strife,
The pain and the sorrow, that we call life;

Who had never faltered beneath her cross,
Nor murmured when loss followed swift on loss.

And the smile that sweetened her lips alway
Lay light on her heaven-closed mouth that day.

I smoothed from her hair a silver thread,
And I wept, but could not think her dead.

I felt, with a wonder too deep for speech,
She could tell what only the angels teach.

And down over her mouth I leaned my ear,
Lest there might be something I should not hear.

Then out from the silence between us stole
A message that reached to my inmost soul.

'Why weep you to-day who have wept before
That the road was rough I must journey o'er?

'Why mourn that my lips can answer you not
When anguish and sorrow are both forgot?

'Behold, all my life I have longed for rest—
Yea, e'en when I held you upon my breast.

'And now that I lie in a breathless sleep,
Instead of rejoicing you sigh and weep.

'My dearest, I know that you would not break—
If you could—my slumber and have me wake.

'For though life was full of the things that bless,
I have never till now known happiness.'

Then I dried my tears, and with lifted head
I left my mother, my beautiful dead.

## THE FIREMAN.—Robert T. Conrad.

The city slumbers. O'er its mighty walls Night's dusky mantle, soft and silent, falls. Stilled is the stir of labour and of life; hushed is the hum, and tranquillised the strife. Man is at rest, with all his hopes and fears; the young forget their sports, the old their cares; the grave are careless; those who joy or weep all rest contented on the arm of sleep.

Sweet is the pillowed rest of beauty now, and slumber smiles upon her tranquil brow; her bright dreams lead her to the moonlit tide, her heart's own partner wandering by her side. 'Tis summer's eve; the soft gales scarcely rouse the low-voiced ripple and the rustling boughs; and, faint and far, some minstrel's melting tone breathes to her heart a music like its own.

When, hark! Oh horror! what a crash is there! What shriek is that which fills the midnight air? 'Tis fire! 'tis fire! She wakes to dream no more; the hot blast rushes through the blazing door; the dun smoke eddies round; and, hark! that cry: 'Help! help! Will no one aid? I die, I die!' She seeks the casement; shuddering at its height, she turns again. The fierce flames mock her flight; along the crackling stairs they fiercely play, and roar, exulting, as they seize their prey. 'Help! help! Will no one come?' She can no more, but, pale and breathless, sinks upon the floor.

Will no one save thee? Yes, there yet is one remains to save, when hope itself is gone; when all have fled, when all but he would fly, the fireman comes, to rescue or to die. He mounts the stair—it wavers 'neath his tread; he seeks the room, flames flashing round his head; he bursts the door; he lifts her prostrate frame, and turns again to brave the raging flame. The fire-blast smites him with its stifling breath; the falling timbers menace him with death; the sinking floors his hurried steps betray; and ruin crashes round his desperate way; hot smoke obscures, the scorching flames arise, yet still he staggers forward with his prize; he leaps from burning stair to stair. On! on! Courage! One effort more, and all is won! The stair is passed—the blazing hall is braved; still on! yet on! once more! *Thank Heaven, she's saved!*

## A SNOWSTORM.—Charles G. Eastman.

'Tis a fearful night in the winter-time,
As cold as it ever can be;
The war of the blast is heard like the chime
Of the waves on an angry sea.
The moon is full, but her silver light
The storm dashes out with her wings to-night;
And over the sky, from south to north,
Not a star is seen, as the wind comes forth
In the strength of a mighty glee.

All day had the snow come down—all day—
As it never came down before,
And over the hills, at sunset, lay
Some two or three feet or more;
The fence was lost, and the wall of stone,
The windows blocked, and the well-curbs gone;
The haystack had grown to a mountain lift,
And the wood-pile looked like a monster drift
As it lay by the farmer's door.

The night set in on a world of snow,
While the air grows sharp and chill,
And the warning roar of a fearful blast
Is heard on the distant hill;
And the norther, see! on the mountain peak,
In his breath how the old trees writhe and shriek;
He shouts on the plain, 'Ho-ho! ho-ho!'
He drives from his nostrils the blinding snow
And growls with a savage will.

Such a night as this, to be found abroad
In the drifts and the freezing air,
Sits a shivering dog, in the field by the road,
With the snow in his shaggy hair.

He shuts his eyes to the wind and growls,
He lifts his head and moans and howls,
Then, crouching low from the cutting sleet,
His nose is pressed on his quivering feet—
  Pray, what does the dog do there?

A farmer came from the village plain,
  But he lost the travelled way,
And for hours he trod with might and main
  A path for his horse and sleigh;
But colder still the cold winds blew,
And deeper still the deep drifts grew,
And his mare, a beautiful Morgan brown,
At last, in her struggle, floundered down
  Where a log in a hollow lay.

In vain, with a neigh and a frenzied snort,
  She plunged in the drifting snow,
While the master urged, till his breath grew short,
  With a word and a gentle blow.
But the snow was deep and the tugs were light,
His hands were numb and had lost their might,
So he wallowed back to his half-filled sleigh,
And strove to shelter himself till day
  With his coat and the buffalo.

He has given the last faint jerk of the rein
  To rouse up his dying steed,
And the poor dog howls to the blast in vain
  For help in his master's need;
For a while he strives, with a wistful cry,
  To catch a glance from his drowsy eye,
And wags his tail if the rude winds flap
The skirts of his buffalo over his lap,
  And whines when he takes no heed.

The wind goes down and the storm is o'er—
  'Tis the hour of midnight past;
The old trees writhe and bend no more
  In the whirl of the rushing blast;

The silent moon, with her peaceful light,
Looks down on the hills with snow all white,
And the giant shadows of Camel's Hump,
The blasted pine and the ghostly stump,
Afar on the plain are cast.

But cold and dead by the hidden log
Are they who came from the town—
The man in his sleigh, and his faithful dog,
And his beautiful Morgan brown—
In the wide snow desert, fair and grand,
With his cap on his head and the reins in his hand,
The dog with his nose on his master's feet,
And the mare half-seen through the crusted sleet,
Where she lay when she floundered down.

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## TOM.—Constance Fenimore Woolson.

Yes, Tom's the best fellow that ever you knew.
Just listen to this:
When the old mill took fire, and the flooring fell through,
And I with it, helpless there, full in my view,
What do you think my eyes saw through the fire
That crept along, crept along, nigher and nigher,
But Robin, my baby-boy, laughing to see
The shining. He must have come there after me,
Toddled alone from the cottage without

Any one missing him. Then, what a shout—
Oh! how I cried out, 'For Heaven's sake, men,
Save little Robin!' Again and again
They tried, but the fire held them back like a wall.
I could hear them go at it, and at it, and call,
'Never mind, baby; sit still like a man!
We're coming to get you as fast as we can.'
They could not see him, but I could. He sat
Still on a beam, his little straw hat
Carefully placed by his side; and his eyes

Stared at the flame with a baby's surprise,
Calm and unconscious, as nearer it crept.
The roar of the fire up above must have kept
The sound of his mother's voice shrieking his name
From reaching the child. But I heard it. It came
Again and again. O God, what a cry!
The axes went faster; I saw the sparks fly
Where the men worked like tigers, nor minded the heat
That scorched them—when, suddenly, there at their feet,

The great beams leaned in—they saw him—then, crash,
Down came the wall! The men made a dash—
Jumped to get out of the way—and I thought,
'All's up with poor little Robin!' and brought
Slowly the arm that was least hurt to hide
The sight of the child there—when swift, at my side,
Some one rushed by, and went right through the flame,
Straight as a dart—caught the child—and then came
Back with him, choking and crying, but—saved!
Scathless and sound!

Oh, how the men raved,
Shouted, and cried, and hurrahed! Then they all
Rushed at the work again, lest the back wall,
Where I was lying, away from the fire,
Should fall in and bury me.

Oh! you'd admire
Brisk Robin now: he's as bright as a ray,
Deep in some mischief each hour of the day.
Tom, it was, saved him. Now, isn't it true
Tom's the best fellow that ever you knew?
There's Robin now! See, he's strong as a log!
And there comes Tom too.

Yes, Tom was our dog.

## OUT OF THE OLD HOUSE, NANCY.

WILL M. CARLETON.

Out of the old house, Nancy—moved up into the new; all the hurry and worry are just as good as through; only a bounden duty remains for you and I, and that 's to stand on the door-step, here, and bid the old house good-bye. What a shell we 've lived in these nineteen or twenty years! Wonder it hadn't smashed in and tumbled about our ears; wonder it stuck together and answered till to-day; but every individual log was put up here to stay.

Things looked rather new, though, when this old house was built, and things that blossomed you would have made some women wilt; and every other day, then, as sure as day would break, my neighbour Ager come this way, invitin' me to 'shake.' And you, for want of neighbours, was sometimes blue and sad, for wolves and bears and wild cats was the nearest ones you had; but, lookin' ahead to the clearin', we worked with all our might until we was fairly out of the woods, and things was goin' right.

Look up there at our new house—ain't it a thing to see? Tall and big and handsome, and new as new can be; all in apple-pie order, especially the shelves, and never a one to say but what we own it all ourselves. Look at our old log-house—how little it now appears! But it 's never gone back on us for nineteen or twenty years; an' I won't go back on it now, or go to pokin' fun—there 's such a thing as praisin' a thing for the good that it has done. Probably you remember how rich we was that night when we was fairly settled, an' had things snug and tight. We feel as proud as you please, Nancy, over our house that 's new; but we felt as proud under this old roof, and a good deal prouder too.

Never a handsomer house was seen beneath the sun. Kitchen and parlour and bedroom, we had 'em all in one; and the fat old wooden clock that we bought when we come West was tickin' away in the corner there, an' doin' its level best. Trees was all

around us, a-whisperin' cheerin' words; loud was the squirrels' chatter, and sweet the song of birds; and home grew sweeter and brighter—our courage began to mount—and things looked hearty and happy then, and work appeared to count.

And here, one night, it happened, when things was goin' bad, we fell in a deep old quarrel—the first we ever had; and when you give out and cried, then I like a fool give in, and then we agreed to rub all out, and start the thing ag'in. Here it was, you remember, we sat when the day was done, and you was a-makin' clothing that wasn't for either one; and often a soft word of love I was soft enough to say, and the wolves was howlin' in the woods not twenty rods away.

Then our first-born baby—a regular little joy—though I fretted a little because it wasn't a boy. Wa'n't she a little flirt, though, with all her pouts and smiles? Why, settlers come to see that show a half-a-dozen miles. Yonder sat the cradle—a homely, home-made thing; and many a night I rocked it, providin' you would sing; and many a little squatter brought up with us to stay, and so that cradle for many a year was never put away.

How they kept a-comin', so cunnin' and fat and small! How they growed! 'Twas a wonder how we found room for 'em all. But though the house was crowded, it empty seemed that day when Jennie lay by the fireplace there, and moaned her life away. And right in there the preacher, with Bible and hymn-book, stood 'twixt the dead and the living,' and 'hoped 'twould do us good.' And the little whitewood coffin on the table there was set, and now as I rub my eyes it seems as if I could see it yet. Then that fit of sickness it brought on you, you know. Just by a thread you hung, and you e'en a'most let go; and here is the spot I tumbled and give the Lord His due when the doctor said the fever 'd turned, an' he could fetch you through. Yes, a deal has happened to make this old house dear—christenin's, funerals, weddin's—what haven't we had here? Not a log in this buildin' but its memories has got, and not a nail in this old floor but touches a tender spot.

Out of the old house, Nancy—moved up into the new; all the hurry and worry is just as good as through; but I tell you a

thing right here that I ain't ashamed to say: there 's precious things in this old house we never can take away. Here the old house will stand, but not as it stood before; winds will whistle through it, and rains will flood the floor; and over the hearth once blazing the snowdrifts oft will pile, and the old thing will seem to be a-mournin' all the while.

Fare you well, old house! you 're naught that can feel or see, but you seem like a human being, a dear old friend to me; and we never will have a better home, if *my* opinion stands, until we commence a-keepin' house in the 'house not made with hands.'

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## THE FOREST FIRE.—CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

The night was grim and still with dread;
No star shone down from heaven's dome;
The ancient forest closed around
The settler's lonely home.

There came a glare that lit the north;
There came a wind that roused the night;
But child and father slumbered on,
Nor saw the growing light.

There came a noise of flying feet,
With many a strange and dreadful cry;
And sharp flames crept and leapt along
The red verge of the sky.

There came a deep and gathering roar;
The father raised his anxious head;
He saw the light, like a dawn of blood,
That streamed across his bed.

It lit the old clock on the wall,
It lit the room with splendour wild,
It lit the fair and tumbled hair
Of the still sleeping child;

And zigzag fence, and rude log barn,
And chip-strewn yard, and cabin gray,
Glowed crimson in the shuddering glare
Of that untimely day.

The boy was hurried from his sleep;
The horse was hurried from his stall;
Up from the pasture clearing came
The cattle's frightened call.

The boy was snatched to the saddle-bow,
Wildly, wildly the father rode.
Behind them swooped the hordes of flame
And harried their abode.

The scorching heat was at their heels;
The huge roar hounded them in their flight;
Red smoke and many a flying brand
Flew o'er them through the night.

And past them fled the wildwood forms—
Far-striding moose, and leaping deer,
And bounding panther, and coursing wolf—
Terrible-eyed with fear.

And closer drew the fiery death;
Madly, madly the father rode;
The horse began to heave and fail
Beneath the double load.

The father's mouth was white and stern,
But his eyes grew tender with long farewell.
He said: 'Hold fast to your seat, Sweetheart,
And ride Old Jerry well!

'I must go back. Ride on to the river,
Over the ford, and the long marsh ride,
Straight on to the town. And I 'll meet you, Sweetheart,
Somewhere on the other side.'

He slipped from the saddle. The boy rode on.
His hand clung fast in the horse's mane;
His hair blew over the horse's neck;
His small throat sobbed with pain.

'Father! father!' he cried aloud.
The howl of the fire-wind answered him
With the hiss of soaring flames and crash
Of shattering limb on limb.

But still the good horse galloped on,
With sinew braced and strength renewed.
The boy came safe to the river ford,
And out of the deadly wood.

. . . . .

And now with his kinsfolk, fenced from fear,
At play in the heart of the city's hum,
He stops in his play to wonder why
His father does not come!

(From *The Book of the Native.*)

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## THE 'GRAY SWAN.'—ALICE CARY.

'Oh, tell me, sailor, tell me true,
Is my little lad, my Elihu,
A-sailing with your ship?'
The sailor's eyes were dim with dew—
'Your little lad, your Elihu?'
He said, with trembling lip—
'What little lad? What ship?'

'What little lad! As if there could be
Another such a one as he!
What little lad, do you say?
Why, Elihu, that took to the sea
The moment I put him off my knee!
It was just the other day
The *Gray Swan* sailed away.'

'The other day?' The sailor's eyes
Stood open with a great surprise—
'The other day? The *Swan?*'
His heart began in his throat to rise.
'Ay, ay, sir, here in the cupboard lies
The jacket he had on.'
'And so your lad is gone?'

'Gone with the *Swan.*' 'And did she stand
With her anchor clutching hold of the sand,
For a month, and never stir?'
'Why, to be sure! I've seen from the land,
Like a lover kissing his lady's hand
The wild sea kissing her—
A sight to remember, sir.'

'But, my good mother, do you know
All this was twenty years ago?
I stood on the *Gray Swan's* deck,
And to that lad I saw you throw,
Taking it off, as it might be, so,
The kerchief from your neck.'
'Ay, and he'll bring it back!'

'And did the little lawless lad
That has made you sick and made you sad,
Sail with the *Gray Swan's* crew?'
'Lawless! The man is going mad!
The best boy ever mother had—
Be sure he sailed with the crew!
What would you have him do?'

'And he has never written line,
Nor sent you word, nor made you sign
To say he was alive?'
'Hold! If 'twas wrong, the wrong is mine;
Besides, he may be in the brine,
And could he write from the grave?
Tut, man, what would you have?'

'Gone twenty years—a long, long cruise.
'Twas wicked thus your love to abuse;
But if the lad still live,
And come back home, think you you can
Forgive him?'—'Miserable man,
You 're mad as the sea—you rave—
What have I to forgive?'

The sailor twitched his shirt so blue,
And from within his bosom drew
The kerchief. She was wild.
'My God! my Father! is it true?
My little lad, my Elihu?
My blessed boy, my child!
My dead—my living child!'

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## THE HERO OF THE COMMUNE.

MARGARET J. PRESTON.

'*Garçon!* You, *you*
Snared along with this cursèd crew?
(Only a child, and yet so bold,
Scarcely as much as ten years old!)
Do you hear? Do you know
Why the *gens d'armes* put you there, in the row,
*You* with those Commune wretches tall,
With your face to the wall?'

'*Know?* To be sure I know! Why not?
We 're here to be shot;
And there, by the pillar, 's the very spot,
Fighting for France, my father fell:
Ah, well—
That 's just the way *I* would choose to fall,
With my *back* to the wall!'

'(*Sacre!* Fair, open fight, I say,
Is something right gallant in its way,
And fine for warming the blood; but who
Wants wolfish work like this to do?
Bah! 'tis a butcher's business!) *How?*
(The boy is beckoning to me now:
I knew that his poor child's heart would fail,
. . . . . Yet his cheek 's not pale:)
Quick! say your say, for don't you see,
When the church-clock yonder tolls out *Three*,
You are all to be shot?
— *What?*
"*Excuse you one moment?*" Oh, ho, ho!
Do you think to fool a *gen d'arme* so?'

'But, sir, here 's a watch that a friend, one day
(My father's friend), just over the way,
Lent me; and if you 'll let me free—
It still lacks seven minutes of *Three*—
I 'll come, on the word of a soldier's son,
Straight back into line when my errand 's done.'

'Ha, ha! No doubt of it! Off! Begone!
(Now, good St Denis, speed him on!
The work will be easier since *he 's* saved;
For I hardly see how I *could* have braved
The ardour of that innocent eye
As he stood and heard,
While I gave the word,
Dooming him like a dog to die.)'

'In time? Well, thanks, that my desire
Was granted; and now I 'm ready—Fire!
One word!—that 's all!—
You 'll let me turn my *back* to the wall?'

'*Parbleu!* Come out of the line, I say;
Come out! (Who said that his name was Ney?)
Ha! France will hear of him yet, one day!'

## THE ROLL-CALL.—N. G. SHEPHERD.

'Corporal Green!' the orderly cried. 'Here!' was the answer, loud and clear, from the lips of the soldier who stood near—and 'Here!' was the word the next replied. 'Cyrus Drew!'—then a silence fell—this time no answer followed the call; only his rear-man had seen him fall, killed or wounded, he could not tell. There they stood in the failing light, these men of battle, with grave, dark looks, as plain to be read as open books, while slowly gathered the shades of night. The fern on the hillsides was splashed with blood, and down in the corn where the poppies grew were redder stains than the poppies knew; and crimson-dyed was the river's flood. For the foe had crossed from the other side that day, in the face of a murderous fire that swept them down in its terrible ire; and their life-blood went to colour the tide.

'Herbert Kline!' At the call there came two stalwart soldiers into the line, bearing between them this Herbert Kline, wounded and bleeding, to answer his name. 'Ezra Kerr!'—and a voice answered, 'Here!' 'Hiram Kerr!'—but no man replied. They were brothers, these two. The sad winds sighed, and a shudder crept through the corn-field near.

'Ephraim Deane!'—then a soldier spoke: 'Deane carried our regiment's colours,' he said; 'where our ensign was shot I left him dead, just after the enemy wavered and broke. Close to the roadside his body lies. I paused a moment and gave him drink; he murmured his mother's name, I think, and death came with it and closed his eyes.' 'Twas a victory; yes, but it cost us dear—for that company's roll, when called at night, of a hundred men who went into the fight, numbered but twenty that answered, 'Here!'

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## 'INASMUCH'—A CHRISTMAS STORY.—WALLACE BRUCE.

You say you want a Meetin'-house for the boys in the gulch up there,
And a Sunday-school with pictur'-books? Well, put me down for a share.

I believe in little children; it 's as nice to hear 'em read
As to wander round the ranch at noon and see the cattle feed.
And I believe in preachin' too—by men for preachin' born,
Who let alone the husks of creed and measure out the corn.
The pulpit 's but a manger where the pews are Gospel-fed;
And they say 'twas to a manger that the Star of Glory led.
So I 'll subscribe a dollar toward the manger and the stalls;
I always give the best I 've got whenever my partner calls.
No matter about the 'nitials—from a farmer, you understand,
Who 's generally had to play it alone from rather an or'nary hand.
I 've never struck it rich, for farming, you see, is slow;
And whenever the crops are fairly good the prices are always low.
A dollar isn't very much, but it helps to count the same;
The lowest trump supports the ace, and sometimes wins the game.
It assists a fellow's praying when he 's down upon his knees—
'Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these.'
I know the verses, stranger, so you needn't stop to quote;
It 's a different thing to know them or to say them off by rote.
I 'll tell you where I learned them, if you 'll step in from the rain:
'Twas down in 'Frisco, years ago—had been there hauling grain:
It was just across the ferry, on the Sacramento pike,
Where stores and sheds are rather mixed, and shanties scatterin' like—
Not the likeliest place to be in. I remember the saloon,
With grocery market, baker-shop, and bar-room all in one,
And this made up the picture—my hair was not then gray,
But everything still seems as real as if 'twere yesterday.
A little girl with haggard face stood at the counter there—
Not more than ten or twelve at most, but worn with grief and care;
And her voice was kind of raspy, like a sort of chronic cold—
Just the tone you find in children who are prematurely old.
She said, 'Two bits for bread and tea; ma hasn't much to eat;
She hopes next week to work again and buy us all some meat.
We 've been half-starved all winter, but spring will soon be here;
And she tells us, "Keep up courage, for God is always near."'

Just then a dozen men came in; the boy was called away
To shake the spotted cubes for drinks, as Forty-niners say.
I never heard from human lips such oaths and curses loud
As rose above the glasses of that crazed and reckless crowd.
But the poor tired girl sat waiting, lost at last to revels deep,
On a keg beside a barrel in the corner, fast aleep.
Well, I stood there, sort of waiting, until some one at the bar
Said, 'Hello! I say, stranger, what have you over thar?'
The boy then told her story; and that crew, so fierce and wild,
Grew intent, and seemed to listen to the breathing of the child.
The glasses all were lowered. Said the leader, 'Boys, see here;
All day we 've been pouring whisky, drinking deep our Christmas cheer.
Here 's two dollars. I 've got feelings, which are not entirely dead,
For this little girl and mother suffering for the want of bread.'
'Here 's a dollar.' 'Here 's another;' and they all gave in their share,
And they planked the ringing metal down upon the counter there.
Then the spokesman took a golden double-eagle from his belt,
Softly stepped from bar to counter, and beside the sleeper knelt;
Took the 'two bits' from her fingers, changed her silver piece for gold.
'See there, boys, the girl is dreaming.' Down her cheeks the tear-drops rolled.
One by one the swarthy miners passed in silence to the street.
Gently we awoke the sleeper, but she started to her feet
With a dazed and strange expression, saying, 'Oh, I thought 'twas true!
Ma was well, and we were happy; round our door-stone roses grew.
We had everything we wanted, food enough and clothes to wear;
And my hand burns where an angel touched it soft with fingers fair.'
As she looked and saw the money in her fingers glistening bright—
'Well, now, ma has long been praying, but she won't believe me quite,

How you 've sent 'way up to heaven, where the golden treasures are,
And have also got an angel clerking at your grocery bar.'
That 's a Christmas story, stranger, which I thought you 'd like to hear;
True to fact and human nature, pointing out one's duty clear.
Hence to matters of subscription you will see that I 'm alive—
Just mark off that dollar, stranger; I think I 'll make it five.

(From *In Clover and Heather*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## ROCKING THE BABY.—Madge Morris Wagner.

I hear her rocking the baby,—
  Her room is just next to mine,—
And I fancy I feel the dimpled arms
  That round her neck entwine,
As she rocks and rocks the baby
  In the room just next to mine.

I hear her rocking the baby
  Each day when the twilight comes,
And I know there 's a world of blessing and love
  In the 'Baby bye' she hums.
I can see the restless fingers
Playing with 'mamma's rings,'
And the sweet little smiling, pouting mouth,
  That to her in kissing clings,
As she rocks and sings to the baby,
  And dreams as she rocks and sings.

I hear her rocking the baby,
  Slower and slower now,
And I know she is leaving her good-night kiss
  On its eyes and cheeks and brow.
From her loving care and rocking
  I wonder would she start
Could she know, through the wall between us,
  She was rocking on my heart?

While my empty arms are aching
For a form they may not press,
And my emptier heart is breaking
In its desolate loneliness.

I list to the rocking, rocking,
In the room just next to mine,
And breathe a prayer in silence
At a mother's broken shrine,
For the woman who rocks the baby
In the room just next to mine.

(From *The Story of the Files.*)

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## THE FIRE-BELL'S STORY.—GEORGE L. CATLIN.

*Dong—Dong*—the bells rang out
Over the housetops; and then a shout
Of 'Fire!' came echoing up the street,
With the sound of eager, hurrying feet.
*Dong—Dong*—the sonorous peal
Came mingled with clatter of engine-wheel
And whistle shrill, and horse's hoof:
And lo! from the summit of yonder roof
A flame bursts forth with a sudden glare.
*Dong—Dong*—on the midnight air
The sound goes ringing out over the town;
And hundreds already are hurrying down
Through the narrow streets, with breathless speed
Following whither the engines lead.
*Dong—Dong*—and from windows high
Startled ones peer at the ruddy sky,
And still the warning loud doth swell
From the brazen throat of the iron-tongued bell,
Sending a shudder, and sending a start
To many a home and many a heart.

Up in yon tenement, where the glare
Shines dimly forth on the starlit air
Through dingy windows; where flame and smoke
Already begin to singe and choke.
See the affrighted ones look out
In helpless terror, in horrible doubt,
Begging for succour. Now, behold
The ladders, by arms so strong and bold,
Are reared; like squirrels the brave men climb
To the topmost story. Indeed, 'twere time—
'They all are saved!' said a voice below,
And a shout of triumph went up. But no—
'Not all—ah, no!'—'twas a mother's shriek;
The cry of a woman, agonised, weak,
Yet nerved to strength by her deep woe's power:
'*Great God, my child!*'—even strong men cower
'Neath such a cry. '*Oh, save my child!*'
She screamed in accents sorrowful, wild.

Up the ladders a dozen men
Rushed in generous rivalry then,
Bravely facing a terrible fate.
Breathless the crowd below await.
See! There 's one who has gained the sill
Of yonder window. Now, with a will,
He bursts the sash with his sturdy blow,
And it rattles down on the road below.
Now he has disappeared from sight—
Faces below are ashen and white
In that terrible moment. Then a cry
Of joy goes up to the flame-lit sky—
Goes up to welcome him back to life.
God help him now in his terrible strife.
Once more he mounts the giddy sill,
Cool and steady and fearless still;
Once more he grasps the ladder—see!
What is it he holds so tenderly?

Thousands of tearful, upturned eyes
Are watching him now; and with eager cries
And sobs and cheerings the air is rent
As he slowly retraces the long descent,
*And the child is saved!*
Ah! ye who sigh
For chivalry dead, in the days gone by,
And prate of the valour of olden time,
Remember this deed of love sublime,
And know that knightly deeds and bold
Are as plentiful now as in days of old.

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## THE KNIGHT'S TOAST.—Anon.

The feast is o'er! Now brimming wine in lordly cup is seen to shine before each eager guest; and silence fills the crowded hall, as deep as when the herald's call thrills in the loyal breast. Then up arose the noble host, and smiling cried: 'A toast! a toast! to all our ladies fair! Here, before all, I pledge the name of Staunton's proud and beauteous dame—the Ladye Gundamere!' Then to his feet each gallant sprung, and joyous was the shout that rung as Stanley gave the word; and every cup was raised on high, nor ceased the loud and gladsome cry till Stanley's voice was heard. 'Enough, enough,' he smiling said, and lowly bent his haughty head; 'that all may have their due, now each in turn must play his part, and pledge the lady of his heart, like gallant knight and true!' Then, one by one, each guest sprang up, and drained in turn the brimming cup, and named the loved one's name; and each, as hand on high he raised, his lady's grace or beauty praised, her constancy and fame.

'Tis now St Leon's turn to rise; on him are fixed those countless eyes: a gallant knight is he; envied by some, admired by all, far famed in lady's bower and hall—the flower of chivalry. St Leon raised his kindling eye and lifts the sparkling cup on high: 'I drink to one,' he said, 'whose image never may depart, deep graven on this grateful heart, till memory be dead. To one

whose love for me shall last when lighter passions long have passed—so holy 'tis and true; to one whose love hath longer dwelt, more deeply fixed, more keenly felt, than any pledged by you.' Each guest upstarted at the word, and laid a hand upon his sword, with fury-flashing eye; and Stanley said: 'We crave the name, proud knight, of this most peerless dame whose love you count so high.' St Leon paused, as if he would not breathe her name in careless mood, thus lightly to another; then bent his noble head, as though to give that word the reverence due, and gently said: 'My mother!'

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## THE BEDOUIN'S REBUKE.—Henry Abbey.

Neeber, a Bedouin of noble heart,
That from good men received of praise the fee,
Owned a brave horse, with which he would not part
Because from death he once had run him free.
The man and beast were friends, and it is vice
To sell our friend or friendship for a price.

The horse was black and strong, his step was proud,
His neck was arched, his ears alert for sound,
His speed the tempest's, and his mane a cloud;
His hoofs woke thunder from the desert ground;
His eyes flashed lightning from their inmost core:
Victor of Distance was the name he bore.

Daher, a Bedouin of another tribe,
Had often wished to buy this famous beast;
And as he smoked, and heard his friends describe
Its comely parts and powers, the wish increased;
But Neeber said the horse should not be sold,
Though offered wealth in camels and in gold.

Then Daher put on rags and stained his face,
And went to wait for Neeber, seeming lame.
Him soon he saw approach at daring pace
Upon the envied horse, and as he came

He cried to him, 'For three days on this spot
Have I lain starving—pity me my lot.'

And, seeing Neeber stop, said on, 'I die—
My strength is gone!' Down Neeber sprang,
And raised him gently, with a pitying sigh,
And set him on his horse: a laugh outrang,
And Daher shouted as he plunged his spurs,
'Fair price refused, one sells at last for burrs.'

'Stay! stay!' cried Neeber; Daher paused to hear:
'Since God has willed that you my beast should take,
I wish you joy; but tell no man, for fear
Another who was really starved might make
Appeal in vain; for some, remembering me,
Would fail to do an act of charity.'

Sharper than steel to Daher seemed remorse!
He quickly turned, and, springing to the ground,
With head bowed low brought Neeber back his horse
Then, falling on his peaceful breast, he wound
His arms about his neck to make amends,
And ever afterward the two were friends.

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## THE FIREMAN'S PRIZE.—ANON.

With his hand upon the throttle as the train swept round the bend, the engineer stood ready the signal forth to send; his eye alert and watchful as he scanned the iron way that between him and the station in the gleaming sunlight lay. All alone he kept his vigil, save for one who, true and tried, with a spirit never failing, shared each danger by his side—his fireman, brave and dauntless, with his nerves like tempered steel; but, with heart of gold within him, prompt to act and quick to feel.

Like a flash of summer lightning, onward dashed the fiery steed, never pausing for a moment in its rush of headlong speed. When suddenly the whistle sounded shrill upon the air, and the engineer grew pallid with a look of wild despair; for

there, before him standing, not a hundred yards away, was a tiny blue-eyed baby, from her mother's arms astray—a fairy little figure, with her bright hair floating back, all unconscious of her danger, on the curving railway track. From the throttle-valve his fingers in a nerveless tremor fell; but only for an instant—quick as thought he struck the bell and reversed the flying engine; but, alas, in vain! in vain! for, with terrible momentum, onward sped the rushing train.

'*You* stay! *I'll* save the baby!' all at once rang in his ear; and, almost before the meaning of his comrade's words was clear, from his cab had leaped the fireman, of the danger thinking naught, driven onward by an impulse that with generous love was fraught. Like a deer before its hunters, like an arrow through the sky, sped he on his noble mission, the dread monster to outvie; while from every door and window of the scarcely slackened train anxious eyes his footsteps followed as he strove the goal to gain. On he dashed, the score of watchers gazing with suspended breath at the contest, so unequal, in the very jaws of death; every voice to whispers sinking, direst fear in every face, lest the brave man, speeding onward, should be conquered in the race. It could last but little longer, and a breathless silence fell, when suddenly, like thunder, rose a wild, triumphant yell, that, echoing and re-echoing, seemed to pierce the very skies, for the fireman was the victor, and the baby's life his prize!

Ah! the smiles and tears and praises showered on him everywhere as he placed the blue-eyed baby in her mother's tender care; then, to his post up-springing, as the train again moved on, 'mid the sound of cheering voices, in a moment he was gone.

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## THE FOOL'S PRAYER.—ANON.

The royal feast was done; the king
  Sought some new sport to banish care,
And to his jester cried: 'Sir Fool,
  Kneel now, and make for us a prayer!'

The jester doffed his cap and bells,
And stood the mocking court before:
They could not see the bitter smile
Behind the patient grin he wore.

He bowed his head, and bent his knee
Upon the monarch's silken stool;
His pleading voice arose: 'O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

'No pity, Lord, could change the heart
From red with wrong to white as wool;
The rod must heal the sin; but, Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!

''Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
'Tis by our follies that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away.

'These clumsy feet still in the mire
Go crushing blossoms without end;
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
Among the heart-strings of a friend.

'The ill-timed truth we might have kept—
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
The word we had not sense to say—
Who knows how grandly it had rung?

'Our faults no tenderness should ask,
The chastening stripe must cleanse them all;
But for our blunders—oh! in shame
Before the eyes of Heaven we fall.

'Earth bears no balsam for mistakes;
Men crown the knave, and scourge the tool
That did his will; but Thou, O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!'

The room was hushed; in silence rose
The king, and sought his garden cool,
And walked apart, and murmured low:
'Be merciful to me, a fool!'

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## THE KING OF DENMARK'S RIDE.—CAROLINE NORTON.

Word was brought to the Danish king
(Hurry!)
That the love of his heart lay suffering,
And pined for the comfort his voice would bring.
(Oh, ride as though you were flying!)
Better he loves each golden curl
On the brow of that Scandinavian girl
Than his rich crown jewels of ruby and pearl;
And his rose of the isles is dying!

Thirty nobles saddled with speed,
(Hurry!)
Each one mounting a gallant steed
Which he kept for battle and days of need.
(Oh, ride as though you were flying!)
Spurs were struck in the foaming flank;
Worn-out chargers staggered and sank;
Bridles were slackened and girths were burst,
But, ride as they would, the king rode first,
For his rose of the isles lay dying!

His nobles are beaten one by one;
(Hurry!)
They have fainted and faltered and homeward gone;
His little fair page now follows alone,
For strength and for courage trying!
The king looked back at that faithful child;
Wan was the face that answering smiled;
They passed the drawbridge with clattering din,
Then he dropped; and only the king rode in
Where his rose of the isles lay dying!

The king blew a blast on his bugle-horn.
(Silence !)
No answer came, but faint and forlorn
An echo returned on the cold, gray morn,
Like the breath of a spirit sighing.
The castle portal stood grimly wide—
None welcomed the king from that weary ride;
For dead, in the light of the dawning day,
The pale, sweet form of the welcomer lay,
Who had yearned for his voice while dying.

The panting steed, with a drooping crest,
Stood weary.
The king returned from her chamber of rest,
The thick sobs choking in his breast;
And, that dumb companion eyeing,
The tears gushed forth which he strove to check;
He bowed his head on his charger's neck;
'O steed, that every nerve didst strain—
Dear steed, our ride hath been in vain
To the halls where my love lay dying!

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## THE MARCH OF COMPANY A.—ANON.

'Forward, march!' was the captain's word. And the tramp of a hundred men was heard, as they formed into line in the morning gray; shoulder to shoulder went Company A. Out of the shadow into the sun, a hundred men who moved as one; out of the dawning into the day, in glittering files, went Company A. Marching along to the rendezvous, by grassy meadows the road ran through, by springing cornfields and orchards gay, forward, forward, went Company A. And the pink and white of the apple-trees, falling fast on the fitful breeze, scattered their dewy, scented spray straight in the face of Company A. A breath like a sigh ran through the ranks treading those odorous blossom banks, for the orchard hillsides far away, the northern hillsides of Company A.

Forward, march! and the dream was sped; out of the pine-wood straight ahead clattered a troop of the Southern gray, face to face with Company A. Forth with a flash in the southern sun a hundred sabres leaped like one. Sudden drum-beat and bugle-play sounded the charge for Company A.

Halt! What is here? A slumbering child, roused by the blast of the bugle wild, between the ranks of the blue and the gray, right in the path of Company A. Nothing knowing of North or South, her dimpled finger within her mouth, her gathered apron with blossoms gay, she stared at the guns of Company A. Straightway set for a sign of truce, a snowy handkerchief fluttered loose; in front of the steel of the Southern gray galloped the captain of Company A. To his saddle-bow he swung the child, with a kiss on the baby lips that smiled, while the boys in blue and the boys in gray cheered for the captain of Company A. Forth from the ranks of his halted men, while the wild hurrahs rang out again, the Southern leader spurred his way to meet the captain of Company A. Out of the arms that held her safe he took with a smile the little waif: a grip of the hand 'twixt blue and gray, and back rode the captain of Company A.

Up there in the distant cottage door a mother clasped her child once more, shuddered at sight of the smoke-cloud gray shrouding the path of Company A. A little later and all was done, the battle was over, the victory won. Nothing was left of the pitiless fray that swept the ranks of Company A. Nothing left save the bloody stain darkening the orchard's rosy rain; dead the chief of the Southern gray, and dead the captain of Company A. Fallen together, the gray and blue, gone to the final rendezvous; a grave to cover, a prayer to say, and—Forward, march! went Company A.

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## THE CAPTAIN'S SECRET.—Samuel Minturn Peck.

There was bay upon his forehead,
  There was glory in his name;
He had led his country's cohorts
  Through the crimson field of fame,

Yet from his breast at midnight,
When the throng had ceased to cheer,
He took a faded blossom
And kissed it with a tear—
A little faded violet,
A bloom of withered hue;
But more than fame
Or loud acclaim
He prized its faded blue.

We have all a hidden story
Of a day more bright and dear;
We may hide it with our laughter—
It will haunt us with a tear.
And we 've all some little keepsake
Where no eye can ever mark,
And, like the great commander,
We kiss it in the dark.
A little faded violet,
Perchance a loop of gold,
A gift of love
We prize above
All that the earth can hold.

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## HOW THE KING LOST HIS CROWN.

J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

The King's men, when he had slain the boar,
Strung it aloft on the fisher's oar,
And, two behind and two before,
In triumph bore it along the shore.
'An oar!' says the King; ''tis a trifle!—why
Did the fisher frown and the good wife sigh?'
'A trifle, sire?' was the Fool's reply.
'Then frown or laugh who will; for I,
Who laugh at all, and am only a clown,
Will never more laugh at trifles.'

A runner next day leaped down the sand,
And launched a skiff from the fisher's strand;
For he cried: 'An army invades the land;
The passes are seized on either hand.
And I must carry my message straight
Across the lake to the castle gate!'
The castle he neared, but the waves were great,
The fanged rocks foamed like jaws of Fate;
And, lacking an oar, the boat went down.
The Furies laugh at trifles!

The swimmer against the waves began
To strive, as a valiant swimmer can.
'Methinks,' said the Fool, ''twere no bad plan
If succour were sent to the drowning man!'
To succour a perilled pawn instead,
The monarch, moving his rook ahead—
Bowed over the chessmen, white and red—
Gave 'Check!'—then looked on the lake, and said,
'The boat is lost, and the man will drown!'
O King, beware of trifles!

To the lords and mirthful dames the bard
Was trolling his latest song; the guard
Were casting dice in the castle yard,
And the captains all were drinking hard.
Then came the chief of the halberdiers,
And told to the King's astounded ears:
'An army on every side appears—
An army with banners and bows and spears!
They have gained the wall and surprised the town!'
Our fates are woven of trifles!

The red usurper reached the throne;
The tidings over the realm were blown;
And, flying to alien lands alone
With a trusty few, the King made moan.
But long and loudly laughed the clown:
'We broke the oar, and the boat went down,

And so the messenger chanced to drown:
The messenger lost, we lost the town;
And the loss of the town has cost a crown:
And all these things are trifles!'

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## OLD HULDAH: A BALLAD OF MARBLEHEAD.

E. NORMAN GUNNISON.

The fisherman stood all day by the beach—stood where the breakers thundered in, and heard the sound of the sea-bird's screech, and dash of waves on the rocks of Lynn.

'The storm is fierce,' said the fisher old; 'and the wind is wild,' the fisher said; 'the rocks are sharp, and the shore is bold, where the p'int makes out from Marblehead; and every ship that is now at sea, bound in to Lynn or to Marblehead, must keep the light three p'ints on the lee, or be wrecked.' So the fisher said.

But not a pilot ventured out—the storm was fierce and the wind was wild, and the daring pilot, swart and stout, still thought of home and his wife and child—thought of them both as the wind made moan, the wind made moan to the breakers' shock; for the world is hard to the left-alone—harder than any New England rock. So the fisher waited by the shore, hearing the waves and the breakers' din, and just at dusk, 'midst the tempest's roar, the good ship *Etna* came sailing in. Staysails set and her courses furled, close-reefed topsail upon her main, to and fro was the good ship hurled over the ocean's watery plain. Plain no longer, for mountain waves broke the sea into furrows vast; the white caps rose over countless graves as the tempest thundered past.

Up spoke Huldah, the fisher's wife—brown old dame of the fishing-coast: 'Where's the pilot? Every life is saved if he keeps his post.'

'There is no pilot at sea to-night,' said Abner Jackson, the skipper's son; while over the water came the light and booming crash of a signal-gun.

'Heavens! They are fetching past the land—past the p'int;

they will strike the rock!' said Jotham Davis. Close at hand came a crash and a rending shock.

'Man the lifeboat!' No man stirred.

Over the din of wind and wave, over the tempest's strife was heard 'Save!' but no human hand could save. Clinging to the wave-washed deck, men and women in wild despair sent their pleading from off the wreck, shuddering on the startled air.

Then spoke Huldah, the fisher's wife: 'Does not a man to save them dare? Will ye stand for a worthless life while they cry in their wild despair? Shame on ye, men! A woman's hand shall do the deed ye dare not try! Who 'll go with me from off the land?'

'I will!' 'And I!' 'And I!' 'And I!'

There they stood in the dying light, down by the boat with oars in hand, five brave women—a braver sight never before was seen on land.

Up spoke gruffly old Fisher Ben, scarred old Triton of the sea: 'Man that boat! Such a sight, my men, never on earth was seen by me. All we can do at worst is die. Better die,' the old Triton said, 'than to live as cowards 'neath the eye of the women of Marblehead.'

Abner Jackson then stepped out, Jotham Davis and Skipper Ben, Bijah Norcross and Ireson Stout—that, they felt, was the place for men. Out past the point where mountain-high crested billows in foam were tossed, sometimes plain on the stormy sky, sometimes hidden, and sometimes lost. Round the point on the stormy wave they reach the rock and gain the wreck; every life they seek to save safe is taken from off the deck. And now strain hard, the goal is near; each hand presses a bending oar. Shout, oh fishermen! cheer on cheer—shout, for they have reached the shore.

That was many a year agone—many a fisherman is dead who saw the ship come sailing on the cruel rocks of Marblehead. Many a man who saw her sail, foam on her prow and rocks a-lee, with no breath of an earthly gale sails the waves of a shoreless sea. The fisher old, with aching joint, tells how the ship came sailing in, wrecked on rocks beyond the point, left her bones by the coast of Lynn.

This is true; for, one stormy day, while I watched a passing sail, the clouds hung over dim and gray, a fisher told to me the tale. Close to the point the rocks still lie, and any fisher were better dead than live a coward beneath the eye of the women of Marblehead.

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## FISHERMAN JIM'S KIDS.—Eugene Field.

Fisherman Jim lived on the hill
  With his bonny wife an' his little boys;
'Twas 'Blow, ye winds, as blow ye will—
  Naught we reck of your cold and noise!'
    For happy and warm were he an' his,
And he dangled his kids upon his knee
      To the song of the sea.

Fisherman Jim would sail all day,
  But when came night upon the sands
His little kids ran from their play,
  Callin' to him an' wavin' their hands;
    Though the wind was fresh and the sea was high,
He 'd hear 'em—you bet—above the roar
      Of the waves on the shore!

Once Fisherman Jim sailed into the bay
  As the sun went down on a cloudy sky,
And never a kid saw he at play;
  And he listened in vain for the welcoming cry:
    In his little house he learned it all,
And he clenched his hands and he bowed his head—
      'The fever!' they said.

'Twas a pitiful time for Fisherman Jim
  With them darlin's a-dyin' afore his eyes,
A-stretchin' their wee hands out to him,
  An' a-breakin' his heart with the old-time cries
    He had heerd so often upon the sands,
For they thought they was helpin' his boat ashore—
      Till they spoke no more.

But Fisherman Jim lived on and on,
Castin' his nets an' sailin' the sea,
As a man will live when his heart is gone;
Fisherman Jim lived hopelessly,
Till once in those years they came an' said:
'Old Fisherman Jim is powerful sick—
Go to him, quick!'

Then Fisherman Jim says he to me:
'It's a long, long cruise—you understand;
But over beyond the ragin' sea
I kin see my boys on the shinin' sand
Waitin' to help this ol' hulk ashore,
Just as they used to—ah, mate, you know!—
In the long ago.'

No, sir! he wasn't afeared to die;
For all night long he seemed to see
His little boys of the days gone by,
An' to hear sweet voices forgot by me!
An' just as the mornin' sun come up—
'They 're holdin' me by the hands!' he cried;
An' so he died.

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## TANTALUS: TEXAS.—JOAQUIN MILLER.

[The Llano Estacado, or staked plain (so called from the means taken by the Mexicans to mark a track for travellers), is a large tableland to the west of the state of Texas, and is without a stream in its extent.]

'If I may trust your love,' she cried,
'And you would have me for a bride,
Ride over yonder plain, and bring
Your flask full from the Mustang Spring.
Fly, fast as western eagle's wing,
O'er the Llano Estacado!'

He heard, and bowed without a word;
His gallant steed he lightly spurred;
He turned his face, and rode away
Towards the grave of dying day,
And vanished with its parting ray
On the Llano Estacado.

Night came, and found him riding on;
Day came, and still he rode alone.
He spared not spur, he drew not rein,
Across that broad, unchanging plain,
Till he the Mustang Spring might gain,
On the Llano Estacado.

A little rest, a little draught,
Hot from his hand, and quickly quaffed;
His flask was filled, and then he turned.
Once more his steed the dry earth spurned,
Once more the sky above him burned
On the Llano Estacado.

How hot the quivering landscape glowed!
His brain seemed boiling as he rode:
Was it a dream, a drunken one,
Or was he really riding on?
Was that a skull that gleamed and shone
On the Llano Estacado?

'Brave steed of mine, brave steed!' he cried,
'So often true, so often tried,
Bear up a little longer yet!'
His mouth was black with blood and sweat—
Heaven! how he longed his lips to wet!
On the Llano Estacado.

And still, within his breast, he held
The precious flask so lately filled.
Oh for a drink! But well he knew

If empty it should meet her view—
Her scorn—— But still his longing grew
On the Llano Estacado.

His horse went down. He wandered on,
Giddy, blind, beaten, and alone.
While upon cushioned couch you lie,
Oh, think how hard it is to die,
Beneath the cruel, unclouded sky,
On the Llano Estacado.

At last he staggered, stumbled, fell;
His day was done, he knew full well;
And raising to his lips the flask,
The end, the object of his task,
Drank to her: more she could not ask.
Ah! the Llano Estacado!

That night in the Presidio,
Beneath the torchlights' wavy glow,
She danced—and never thought of him,
The victim of a woman's whim,
Lying, with face upturned and grim,
On the Llano Estacado.

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## THE DEATH OF THE OLD SQUIRE.—ANON.

'Twas a wild, mad kind of night, as black as the bottomless pit; the wind was howling away, like a Bedlamite in a fit, tearing the ash-boughs off and mowing the poplars down in the meadows beyond the old flour-mill, where you turn off to the town. And the rain—well, it *did* rain, dashing against the window glass, and deluging on the roof, as the devil were come to pass; the gutters were running in floods outside the stable-door, and the spouts splashed from the tiles as if they never would give o'er. Lor', how the winders rattled!—you 'd almost ha' thought that thieves were wrenching at the shutters; while a

ceaseless pelt of leaves flew to the doors in gusts; and I could hear the beck falling so loud I knew at once it was up to a tall man's neck.

We was huddling in the harness-room, by a little scrap of fire; and Tom the coachman, he was there, a-practising for the choir; but it sounded dismal, anthem did, for Squire was dying fast, and the doctor said, do what he would, Squire's breaking up at last. The death-watch, sure enough, ticked loud just over the owd mare's head; though he had never once been heard up there since master's boy lay dead; and the only sound, beside Tom's toon, was the stirring in the stalls and the gnawing and the scratching of the rats in the owd walls. We couldn't hear Death's foot pass by, but we knew that he was near; and the chill rain and the wind and cold made us all shake with fear. We listened to the clock upstairs; 'twas breathing soft and low, for the nurse said at the turn of night the old Squire's soul would go.

Master had been a wildish man, and led a roughish life. Didn't he shoot the Bowton squire who dared write to his wife? He beat the Rads at Hindon Town, I heard, in twenty-nine, when every pail in market-place was brimmed with red port wine. And as for hunting, bless your soul! why, for forty year or more he'd kept the Marley hounds, man, as his fayther did afore. And now to die, and in his bed—the season just begun—'It made him fret,' the doctor said, 'as it might do any one.'

And when the young sharp lawyer came to see him sign his will, Squire made me blow my horn outside as we were going to kill; and we turned the hounds out in the court—that seemed to do him good, for he swore and sent us off to seek a fox in Thornhill Wood. But then the fever it rose high, and he would go see the room where mistress died ten years ago when Lammastide shall come.

It might be two, or half-past two; the wind seemed quite asleep. Tom, he was off; but I, awake, sat watch and ward to keep. The moon was up, quite glorious-like, the rain no longer fell, when all at once out clashed and clanged the rusty turret bell, that hadn't been heard for twenty year, not since the Luddite days. Tom, he leaped up, and I leaped up, for all the

house ablaze had, sure, not scared us half as much, and out we ran like mad—I, Tom, and Joe the whipper-in, and t' little stable-lad.

'He 's killed himself'—that 's the idea that came into my head; I felt as sure as though I saw Squire Barrowly was dead; when all at once a door flew back, and he met us face to face; his scarlet coat was on his back, and he looked like the old race. The nurse was clinging to his knees and crying like a child; the maids were sobbing on the stairs, for he looked fierce and wild. 'Saddle me Lightning Bess, my men,' that 's what he said to me; 'the moon is up; we 're sure to find at Stop or Etterly. Get out the dogs; I 'm well to-night, and young again and sound; I 'll have a run once more before they put me underground. They brought my father home feet first, and it never shall be said that his son Joe, who rode so straight, died quietly in his bed.

'Brandy!' he cried; 'a tumbler full, you women howling there;' then clapped the old black velvet cap upon his long gray hair, thrust on his boots, snatched down his whip; though he was old and weak there was a devil in his eye that would not let me speak. We loosed the dogs to humour him, and sounded on the horn: the moon was up above the woods just east of Haggard Bourne; I buckled Lightning's throat-lash fast; the Squire was watching me; he let the stirrups down himself so quick, yet carefully. Then up he got and spurred the mare, and ere I well could mount he drove the yard gate open, man, and called to old Dick Blount, our huntsman, dead five years ago —for the fever rose again, and was spreading like a flood of flame fast up into his brain.

Then off he flew before the dogs, yelling to call us on; while we stood there, all pale and dumb, scarce knowing he was gone. We mounted, and below the hill we saw the fox break out, and down the covert ride we heard the old Squire's parting shout. And in the moonlit meadow mist we saw him fly the rail beyond the hurdles by the beck, just half-way down the vale: I saw him breast fence after fence—nothing could turn him back; and in the moonlight after him streamed out the brave old pack.

'Twas like a dream, Tom cried to me, as we rode free and fast, hoping to turn him at the brook, that could not well be

passed, for it was swollen with the rain; but ah, 'twas not to be; nothing could stop old Lightning Bess but the broad breast of the sea. The hounds swept on, and well in front the mare had got her stride; she broke across the fallow land that runs by the down-side. We pulled up on Chalk Linton Hill, and as we stood us there, two fields beyond we saw the Squire fall stone dead from the mare. Then she swept on, and in full cry the hounds went out of sight; a cloud came over the broad moon, and something dimmed our sight as Tom and I bore master home, both speaking under breath. And that 's the way I saw th' owd Squire ride boldly to his death.

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## THE WRECK OF THE 'INDIAN CHIEF.'

CLEMENT SCOTT.

Outward bound in the *Indian Chief*, with skipper and pilot, a northern man,
Thirty all told, from the Yorkshire coast, we sailed for the Channel, to make Japan.
Icily cold from the nor'-nor'-east, the wind like an arrow went whistling by;
The stars stood sharp by a frozen moon; and the moon stared white in a frosty sky;
And the skipper he cried as we changed the watch, 'Keep a good lookout—do you understand?
We must strain our eyes for the changing light, and clear the surf of the Goodwin Sand.
I 've sailed on a fouler night, my lads; but many a vessel has come to grief
In spite of the flash of the anchored light. Still, here 's good luck to the *Indian Chief!*'

It seemed so strange that a starlit sky should look so calm on a seething sea;
And a crueller wind never shivered the skin, or made the mast like a bending tree.

We were miles away from the Ramsgate Pier, and our course
far away from the Kentish Knock,
When the ship gave a shy like a frightened horse, and then came
a crash and a sickening shock;
We knew what it meant when, without any fuss, the skipper and
pilot folded hands,
And the rockets went up in the pitiless sky—we had struck on
the bar of the Goodwin Sands!
What was the use of the compass now, or sail, or rudder? No
treacherous reef
Could ever imprison with firmer grip than the sands that
swallowed the *Indian Chief!*

It didn't take long for the end to come, when the waves washed
savagely over our deck,
So we lighted a flare as a desperate chance, to guide brave men
to our hopeless wreck.
The pilot, the skipper, his brother the mate, and the thirty odd
souls in a desperate plight,
Crept into the masts in the searching cold, looking death in the
face on a New Year's night.
One by one, as the masts gave way, they dropped like birds
from a frozen tree,
When the skipper, who clung to his brother the mate, sang out,
'Thank God! There 's the lifeboat! See!'
We thought him mad, with his fingers stretched to a distant
speck like a floating leaf.
''Tis a branch of olive!' the pilot cried, and the message is,
'Hope for the *Indian Chief*.'

Lashed to their oars, in the blinding storm, out they had come
in a steamer's wake,
Ramsgate men, with never a care for a sailor's death, for a
sailor's sake.
Out there followed from Clacton coast, Aldborough, Harwich,
a score of hands,
When the tidings travelled: 'An English ship is breaking her
back upon Goodwin Sands.'

'Twas a race for life, and the *Bradford* won! But as soon as the boat from the tug was cast
The sea stood in front of the Ramsgate men, as they heard the shrieks from the sinking mast.
Shouts of succour across the waves, and cries of agony past belief—
What is the use of a lifeboat manned when the sea has a prize in the *Indian Chief?*

The skipper lay dead by his brother the mate, with a smile on his face for the wife at home,
And the morning broke to the moan, 'How long?' and the endless cry, 'Will the lifeboat come?'

. . . . . .

But the evening closed on a conquered sea, and masts where never a sailor clings;
And they run to the end of the Ramsgate Pier, to see the prize that the lifeboat brings.
It isn't in money or gold that's paid the terrible debt of the enemy sea,
But flesh and blood of a shipwrecked crew is a richer reward you 'll all agree.
Many a ship, as the year rolls on, with skipper and pilot and faithful hands,
Will sail from home on a winter sea, and drift to death upon Goodwin Sands.
But when the plea for the Lifeboat comes, there 'll not be many to grudge relief
To the men who answered to duty's call, and stood by the wreck of the *Indian Chief!*

(From *Lays and Lyrics*, Messrs Routledge & Sons, by kind permission of the author.)

## UNDER THE PURPLE AND MOTLEY.

ROBERT J. BURDETTE.

Well might the king wear sackcloth; his were a nation's woes,
And every sob from a million lips was one of his own heart's throes;
The tears of his people burned his cheeks, their hunger gnawed his breast;
The pain that ached in their hollow eyes drove peace from his sleepless rest.

But the jester—who laughed in the palace; who mocked at the shrivelled lips
Of gaunt-eyed Famine, and turned aside her moan with his nimble quips;
Who rippled a stave of a reveller's song when the woman, with bitter cry,
Shrieked, 'Help, O king, for God will not!' as the helpless king passed by:

The jester—who grinned at the scanty fare they spread at the royal board,
And tittered a grace, more jest than prayer, and more to the guests than the Lord;
Who wrinkled his face with a wry grimace, while the people looked aghast
At the sackcloth under the purple robes of their king as he went past:

The jester—whose merry gibes were heard in all that doleful while—
Should he wear sackcloth like the king? Why, Famine's self would smile;
He, light and empty of heart and thought as the jingling bells he wore—
He would laugh at the sackcloth and jest at the ache of the heart it covered o'er:

The jester—Death laughed in his face one day, and the smile on
his lips was chilled;
So strange it seemed for him to die that all the Court was filled
With ripples of laughter, hushed and low, just tinged with pity
and shame;
But the smiles would come when they coupled Death with the
frolicsome jester's name.

So with pitying smiles and hands they dressed the dead for the
Court of Death;
They stripped off his motley—the grotesque rags—and then,
with startled breath,
They looked in amaze, for, chafing his breast with its irritant
rankle and sting,
Under his motley the jester wore sackcloth—like the king.

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## LITTLE PAT AND THE PARSON.—ANON.

He stands at the door of the church peeping in; no troublesome beadle is near him; the preacher is talking of sinners and sin, and little Pat trembles to hear him—a poor little fellow alone and forlorn, who never knew parent or duty; his head is uncovered, his jacket is torn, and hunger has withered his beauty.

The white-headed gentleman shut in the box seems growing more angry each minute; he doubles his fist and the cushion he knocks, as if anxious to know what is in it. He scolds at the people who sit in the pews—Pat takes them for kings and princesses—(with his little bare feet, he delights in their shoes; in his rags, he feels proud of their dresses!) The parson exhorts them to think of their need, to turn from the world's dissipation, the naked to clothe, and the hungry to feed—Pat listens with strong approbation'

And when the old clergyman walks down the aisle, Pat runs up to meet him right gladly. 'Shure, give me my dinner!' says he, with a smile, 'and a jacket—I want them quite badly.' The kings and the princesses indignantly stare; the beadle gets word of the danger, and, shaking his silver-tipped stick in the

air, looks knives at the poor little stranger. But Pat 's not afraid; he is sparkling with joy, and cries—who so willing to cry it? —'You 'll give me my dinner—I 'm such a poor boy: you said so—now don't you deny it.'

The pompous old beadle may grumble and glare, and growl about robberies and arson; but the boy who has faith in the sermon stands there, and smiles at the white-headed parson! The kings and princesses may wonder and frown, and whisper he wants better teaching; but the white-headed parson looks tenderly down on the boy who has faith in his preaching. He takes him away without question or blame, as eager as Patsy to press on, for he thinks a good dinner (and Pat thinks the same) is the moral that lies in the lesson.

And after long years, when Pat, handsomely dressed—a smart footman—is asked to determine of all earthly things what 's the thing he likes best, he says, 'Och, shure, the master's ould sermin!'

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## THE OLD MAN AND JIM.—James Whitcomb Riley.

Old Man never had much to say—
'Ceptin' to Jim—
And Jim was the wildest boy he had—
And the Old Man jes' wrapped up in him!
Never heerd him speak but once
Er twice in my life—and first time was
When the army broke out, and Jim he went,
The Old Man backin' him, fer three months.
And all 'at I heerd the Old Man say
Was, jes' as we turned to start away:
'Well; good-bye, Jim:
Take keer of yourse'f!'

'Peared-like, he was more satisfied
Jes' *lookin'* at Jim,
And likin' him all to hisse'f-like, see?—
'Cause he was jes' wrapped up in him!

And over and over I mind the day
The Old Man come and stood round in the way
While we was drillin', a-watchin' Jim—
And down at the deepot a-heerin' him say:
'Well; good-bye, Jim:
Take keer of yourse'f!'

Never was nothin' about the farm
Distinguished Jim;
Neighbours all us't to wonder why
The Old Man 'peared wrapped up in him:
But when Cap. Biggler he writ back
'At Jim was the bravest boy we had
In the whole dern regiment, white er black,
And his fightin' good as his farmin' bad—
'At he had led, with a bullet clean
Bored through his thigh, and carried the flag
Through the bloodiest battle you ever seen—
The Old Man wound up a letter to him
'At Cap. read to us, 'at said: 'Tell Jim
Good-bye;
And take keer of hisse'f.'

Jim come back jes' long enough
To take the whim
'At he'd like to go back in the cavelry—
And the Old Man jes' wrapped up in him!
Jim 'lowed 'at he'd had sich luck afore,
Guessed he'd tackle her three years more.
And the Old Man gave him a colt he'd raised
And follered him over to Camp Ben Wade,
And laid around for a week er so,
Watchin' Jim on dress-parade—
Tel finally he rid away,
And last he heerd was the Old Man say:
'Well; good-bye, Jim:
Take keer of yourse'f!'

Tuk the papers, the Old Man did,
A-watchin' fer Jim—
Fully believin' he 'd make his mark
*Some* way—jes' wrapped up in him!—
And many a time the word 'u'd come
'At stirred him up like the tap of a drum—
At Petersburg, fer instance, where
Jim rid right into their cannons there,
And tuk 'em, and p'inted 'em t'other way,
And socked it home to the boys in gray,
As they skooted fer timber, and on and on—
Jim a lieutenant and one arm gone,
And the Old Man's words in his mind all day:
'Well; good-bye, Jim:
Take keer of yourse'f!'

Think of a private, now, perhaps,
We 'll say like Jim,
'At 's clumb clean up to the shoulder-straps—
And the Old Man jes' wrapped up in him!
Think of him—with the war plum' through,
And the glorious old Red-White-and-Blue
A-laughin' the news down over Jim,
And the Old Man, bendin' over him—
The surgeon turnin' away with tears
'At hadn't leaked fer years and years—
As the hand of the dyin' boy clung to
His father's, the old voice in his ears:
'Well; good-bye, Jim:
Take keer of yourse'f!'

(From *Poems Here at Home*, by kind permission of Messrs Longmans, Green, & Co.)

# CIVIL WAR—AN EPISODE OF THE COMMUNE.

VICTOR HUGO.

(*Translated by Lucy H. Hooper.*)

The mob was fierce and furious. They cried,
'Kill him!' the while they pressed from every side
Around a man, haughty, unmoved, and brave,
Too pitiless himself to pity crave.

'Down with the wretch!' on all sides rose the cry.
The captive found it natural to die;
The game is lost—he 's on the weaker side;
Life too is lost, and so must fate decide.

From out his home they drag him to the street,
With fiercely clenching hands and hurrying feet,
And shouts of 'Death to him!' The crimson stain
Of recent carnage on his garb showed plain.

This man was one of those who blindly slay
At a king's bidding. He 'd shot men all day,
Killing he knew not whom, he scarce knew why,
Now marching forth impassible to die,
Incapable of mercy or of fear,
Letting his powder-blackened hands appear.

A woman clutched his collar with a frown,
'He 's a policeman—he has shot us down!'

'That 's true,' the man said. 'Kill him!' 'Shoot!' 'Kill!'
'No; at the Arsenal'—'The Bastille!' 'Where you will,'
The captive answered. And with fiercest breath,
Loading their guns, his captors still cried 'Death!'

'We 'll shoot him like a wolf!' 'A wolf, am I?
Then you 're the dogs,' he calmly made reply.

'Hark, he insults us!' And from every side
Clenched fists were shaken, angry voices cried,
Ferocious threats were muttered, deep and low.
With gall upon his lips, gloom on his brow,
And in his eye a gleam of baffled hate,
He went, pursued by howlings, to his fate,
Treading with wearied and supreme disdain
'Midst forms of dead men he perchance had slain.

Dread is that human storm, an angry crowd;
He braved its wrath with head erect and proud.
He was not taken, but walled in with foes,
He hated them with hate the vanquished knows;
He would have shot them all had he the power.
'Kill him—he 's fired upon us for an hour!'
'Down with the murderer—down with the spy!'
And suddenly a small voice made reply,
'No—no; he is my father!' And a ray
Like to a sunbeam seemed to light the day.

A child appeared, a boy with golden hair,
His arms upraised in menace or in prayer.

All shouted, 'Shoot the bandit, fell the spy!'
The little fellow clasped him with a cry
Of 'Papa, papa, they 'll not hurt you now!'
The light baptismal shone upon his brow.

From out the captive's home had come the child.
Meanwhile the shrieks of 'Kill him!'—'Death!' rose wild.

The cannon to the tocsin's voice replied,
Sinister men thronged close on every side,
And in the street ferocious shouts increased
Of 'Slay each spy—each minister—each priest—
We 'll kill them all!'
The little boy replied:
'I tell you this is papa.' One girl cried,
'A pretty fellow—see his curly head!'
'How old are you, my boy?' another said.

'Do not kill papa!' only he replies.
A soulful lustre lights his streaming eyes.

Some glances from his gaze are turned away,
And the rude hands less fiercely grasp their prey.

Then one of the most pitiless says, 'Go—
Get you home, boy.' 'Where—why?' 'Don't you know?
Go to your mother.' Then the father said,
'He has no mother.' 'What!—his mother's dead?
Then you are all he has?' 'That matters not,'
The captive answers, losing not a jot
Of his composure as he closely pressed
The little hands to warm them in his breast,
And says, 'Our neighbour Catherine, you know;
Go to her.' 'You 'll come too?' 'Not yet.' 'No, no.
Then I 'll not leave you.' 'Why?' 'These men, I fear,
Will hurt you, papa, when I am not here.'

The father to the chieftain of the band
Says softly, 'Loose your grasp and take my hand;
I 'll tell the child to-morrow we shall meet;
Then you can shoot me in the nearest street,
Or farther off, just as you like.' ''Tis well!'
The words from those rough lips reluctant fell.
And, half-unclasped, the hands less fierce appear.
The father says, 'You see, we 're all friends here;
I 'm going with these gentlemen to walk;
Go home. Be good. I have no time to talk.'
The little fellow, reassured and gay,
Kisses his father and then runs away.

'Now he is gone, and we are at our ease,
And you can kill me where and how you please,'
The father says. 'Where is it I must go?'
Then through the crowd a long thrill seems to flow;
The lips, so late with cruel wrath afoam,
Relentingly and roughly cry, 'Go home!'

## MARGUERITE.—J. G. WHITTIER.

The robin sang in the orchard, the buds into blossoms grew;
Little of human sorrow the buds and the robins knew!

Sick, in an alien household, the poor French neutral lay;
Into her lonesome garret fell the light of the April day,

Through the dusty window, curtained by the spider's warp and woof,
On the loose-laid floor of hemlock, on oaken ribs of roof,

The bedquilt's faded patchwork, the tea-cups on the stand,
The wheel with flaxen tangle, as it dropped from her sick hand!

What to her was the song of the robin, or warm morning light,
As she lay in the trance of the dying, heedless of sound or sight?

Done was the work of her hands; she had eaten her bitter bread;
The world of the alien people lay behind her dim and dead.

But her soul went back to its childtime; she saw the sun o'erflow
With gold the basin of Minas, and set over Gasperau;

The low, bare flats at ebb-tide, the rush of the sea at flood,
Through inlet and creek and river, from dike to upland wood;

The gulls in the red of morning, the fish-hawk's rise and fall,
The drift of the fog in moonshine over the dark coast-wall.

She saw the face of her mother; she heard the song she sang;
And far off, faintly, slowly, the bell for vespers rang.

By her bed the hard-faced mistress sat, smoothing the wrinkled sheet,
Peering into the face so helpless, and feeling the ice-cold feet;

With a vague remorse atoning for her greed and long abuse,
By care no longer heeded and pity too late for use.

Up the stairs of the garret softly the son of the mistress stepped,
Leaned over the head-board, covering his face with his hands, and wept.

Out spake the mother, who watched him sharply, with brow a-frown:
'What! love you the Papist, the beggar, the charge of the town?'

'Be she Papist or beggar who lies here, I know, and God knows,
I love her, and fain would go with her wherever she goes!

'O mother! that sweet face came pleading, for love so athirst:
You saw but the town-charge; I knew her God's angel at first.'

Shaking her gray head, the mistress hushed down a bitter cry;
And, awed by the silence and shadow of death drawing nigh,

She murmured a psalm of the Bible; but closer the young girl pressed,
With the last of her life in her fingers, the cross to her breast.

'My son, come away,' cried the mother, her voice cruel grown.
'She is joined to her idols, like Ephraim; let her alone!'

But he knelt with his hand on her forehead, his lips to her ear,
And he called back the soul that was passing: 'Marguerite, do you hear?'

She paused on the threshold of heaven; love, pity, surprise,
Wistful, tender, lit up for an instant the cloud of her eyes.

With his heart on his lips he kissed her, but never her cheek grew red,
And the words the living long for he spake in the ear of the dead.

And the robins sang in the orchard, where buds to blossoms grew.
Of the folded hands and the still face never the robins knew!

## THE BABY'S KISS: AN INCIDENT OF THE CIVIL WAR.

G. R. EMERSON.

Rough and ready the troopers ride,
Pistol in holster and sword by side;
They have ridden long, they have ridden hard,
They are travel-stained and battle-scarred.
The hard ground shakes with their martial tramp,
And coarse is the laugh of the men of the camp.

They reach a spot where a mother stands
With a baby, shaking its little hands,
Laughing aloud at the gallant sight
Of the mounted soldiers fresh from the fight.
The captain laughs out, 'I will give you this,
A bright piece of gold, your baby to kiss.'

'My darling's kisses cannot be sold,
But gladly he 'll kiss a soldier bold.'
He lifts up the babe with a manly grace,
And covers with kisses its smiling face,
Its rosy cheeks, and its dimpled charms;
And it crows with delight in the soldier's arms.

'Not all for the captain,' the troopers call;
'The baby, we know, has a kiss for all.'
To each soldier's breast the baby is pressed
By the strong, rough men, and kissed and caressed;
And louder it laughs, and the woman's face
Wears a mother's smile at the fond embrace.

'Just such a kiss,' cries one warrior grim,
'When I left my boy, I gave to him.'
'And just such a kiss, on the parting day,
I gave to my girl as asleep she lay.'
Such were the words of these soldiers brave,
And their eyes were moist when the kiss they gave.

## THE RACE AT DEVIL'S ELBOW.—James Buckham

Devil's Elbow was clean gone wild!
  Men and women were in the street,
Shouting, crying! And why? A child,
  Toddling down with uncertain feet,
Came to the river bluff, and—'Ho!
  See it there, where the tide runs back?'
(Wee white face, like a puff of snow.)
  'Quick! a lariat! Now, stand back!'

Buckskin Pete made a fling as straight
As an arrow's flight—but it fell too late;
The little tossed hands and golden head
Sank from sight ere the loop had sped!
Hoarse lamenting and weeping sore
Rose from the crowd on the beetling shore.

Swift the current and deep the gorge
  Glooming down to the Devil's Leap;
Knotted muscle, from mine or forge,
  Vain would battle the current's sweep.
Never a boat, though its stuff were stout,
But the rocks would batter it inside out.
Little hope for the babe unless—
  Tossed and buoyed in the Father's hand,
Stayed, perhaps, by its bit of dress—
  Some one rode to the bridge that spanned
The gorge at the Devil's Leap, and stopped
The tiny innocent ere it dropped
Into the roaring gulf of surge,
Over the cataract's awful verge.

Who should do it must do it soon!
  Every man to his saddle sprang.
Off they went, like a jangling tune—
  The hoofs and the spurs and the bridles rang.

Four miles down by the river's crook,
  Six miles round by the rocky trail.
Figure it out by guess or by book
  Which of the racers were like to fail.
Horse against current—a ten mile gait,
We 'll say, to the river's seven or eight.
Close enough when it 's life and death—
Not much muscle to spare, or breath !

First and foremost rode Reckless Dan.
  No one thought óf him at the start;
No one dreamed that his heart could plan
  A rescue—nay, dreamed that he *had* a heart !
Always first in the fight and brawl,
  Always last at the dance or spree;
With a sneer, or a curse, or a blow for all,
  Not a friend in the world had he.
None ?—not a *human* friend, indeed;
  But ne'er was a closer bond than drew
The heart of the plainsman to his steed,
  And the heart of the horse to the master, too.

One by one fell the field behind,
  Till Dan's gray horse was without a mate.
His long mane flew in his own speed's wind,
  And he seemed to know he was match'd with fate
Neck and muzzle stretched out in line;
  Ears, like arrow-tips, pricking back;
Nostrils red as the new-prest wine—
  So he galloped along the track.
Not a man of them in the race
  Save Reckless Dan ! Will he brave it through ?
Think you his heart has some human grace ?
  Deep in the core, is it warm and true ?
  Well—while they doubted on he flew !
After him floated the choking dust,
  Under him glided the narrow trail.
Beat the river he would and must.
  When did he ever try and fail ?

Thirty minutes—and round the bend
  Flashed his horse, like a streak of gray.
Now for a straight course to the end,
  Hold the pace, and life wins the day!
Foam on the flank and foam on the lip;
  Nostrils crimsoned with oozing blood;
Heaving girth and a trembling hip—
  Yea—but think of the racing flood!
Down they swept by the sandstone bluff.
  Dim grew the rocky trail and rough.
Still they thundered along the pass,
Like storm-wind bowing the summer grass.
Forty minutes—the bridge in sight,
Spanning the gorge with a web of light!
Rails agleam in the slanting sun,
Rods and cables like silver spun.

Out of the saddle sprang Reckless Dan,
Just where the network of steel began.
Not a moment he paused to think,
But ventured out from the dizzy brink,
Step by step on the narrow ties,
Scanning the river with eager eyes.
Suddenly, stooping, with trembling haste
He fastened the lariat round his waist,
Tied it fast to an iron beam,
And swung out over the rushing stream.
Up the river, had flashed in sight
A bit of flotsam all gleaming white!
Ere it should pass there was life and hope;—
Down he slipped on his swaying rope.

Saved!—but they drew them up half-dead,
  Man and child, from the whirlpool's grasp.
Close to Dan's bosom the golden head,
  Strained in his tight, convulsive clasp.
Saved! and the cañon rang again
With the joyful shouts of the rough-garbed men.

'Hooray,' they cried, 'for Reckless Dan!
His heart's big enough for any man!'
Ay, big enough and warm enough,
Like many another in the rough.
God sets a child in the midst, and—lo!
Man's inhumanity melts like snow!

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## A RAJPÛT NURSE.—Sir Edwin Arnold.

'Whose tomb have they builded, Vittoo! under this tamarind-tree,
With its door of the rose-veined marble, and white dome stately to see?
Was he holy Brahman, or Yogi, or chief of the Rajpût line,
Whose urn rests here by the river, in the shade of the beautiful shrine?'

'May it please you,' quoth Vittoo, salaaming, 'Protector of all the poor!
It was not for holy Brahman they carved that delicate door;
Nor for Yogi, nor Rajpût Rana, built they this gem of our land;
But to tell of a Rajpût woman as long as the stones should stand.

'Her name was Môti, the pearl-name; 'twas far in the ancient times;
But her moon-like face and her teeth of pearl are sung of still in our rhymes;
And because she was young and comely, and of good repute, and had laid
A babe in the arms of her husband,* the palace-nurse she was made:

'For the sweet chief-queen of the Rana in Joudhpore city had died,
Leaving a motherless infant, the heir to that race of pride;

* A Hindu father acknowledges paternity by receiving in his arms his new-born child.

The heir of the peacock-banner, of the five-coloured flag, of the throne
Which traces its record of glory from days when it ruled alone;

'From times when, forth from the sunlight,* the first of our kings came down,
And had the earth for his footstool, and wore the stars for his crown,
As all good Rajpûts have told us; so Môti was proud and true,
With the Prince of the land on her bosom, and her own brown baby too.

'And the Rajpût women will have it (I know not myself of these things),
As the two babes lay on her lap there, her lord's and the Joudhpore King's,
So loyal was the blood of her body, so fast the faith of her heart,
It passed to her new-born infant, who took of her trust its part.

'He would not suck of the breast-milk till the Prince had drunken his fill;
He would not sleep to the cradle-song till the Prince was lulled and still;
And he lay at night with his small arms clasped round the Rana's child,
As if those hands, like the rose-leaf, could shelter from treason wild.

'For treason was wild in the country, and villainous men had sought
The life of the heir of the *gadi*,† to the palace in secret brought;
With bribes to the base, and with knife-thrusts for the faithful, they made their way
Through the line of the guards, and the gateways, to the hall where the women lay.

* The Rajpût dynasty is said to be descended from the Sun.
† The 'seat,' or throne.

'There Môti, the foster-mother, sat singing the children to rest,
Her baby at play on her crossed knees, and the King's son held to her breast;
And the dark slave-maidens around her beat low on the cymbal's skin,
Keeping the time of her soft song—when—Sahib—there hurried in

'A breathless watcher, who whispered, with horror in eyes and face:
"O Môti! men come to murder my Lord the Prince in this place!
They have bought the help of the gate-guards, or slaughtered them unawares—
Hark! that is the noise of their *tulwars*,* the clatter upon the stairs!"

'For one breath she caught her baby from her lap to her heart, and let
The King's child sink from her nipple with lips still clinging and wet,
Then tore from the Prince his head-cloth, and the *putta* of pearls from his waist,
And bound the belt on her infant, and the cap on his brows, in haste;

'And laid her own dear offspring, her flesh and blood, on the floor,
With the girdle of pearls around him, and the cap that the King's son wore;
While close to her heart, which was breaking, she folded the Râja's joy,
And—even as the murderers lifted the *purdah*—she fled with his boy.

'But there (so they deemed), in his jewels, lay the Chota Rana,† the heir.
"The cow with two calves has escaped us," cried one; "it is right and fair

* Indian swords. † 'Little king.'

She should save her own *butcha.** No matter; the edge of the dagger ends
This spark of Lord Raghoba's sunlight; stab thrice and four times, O friends!"

'And the Rajpût women will have it (I know not if this can be so)
That Môti's son, in the *putta* and golden cap, cooed low
When the sharp blades met in his small heart, with never one moan or wince,
But died with a babe's light laughter, because he died for his Prince.

'Thereby did that Rajpût mother preserve the line of our kings.'
'O Vittoo!' I said, 'but they gave her much gold and beautiful things,
And garments, and land for her people, and a home in the Palace! Maybe
She had grown to love that Princeling even more than the child on her knee.'

'May it please the Presence,' quoth Vittoo, 'it seemed not so; they gave
The gold and the garments and jewels as much as the proudest would have;
But the same night deep in her true heart she buried a knife, and smiled,
Saying this: "I have saved my Rana! I must go to suckle my child!"'

'Little one.'

(From *Lotus and Jewel*, by kind permission of the author.)

## THE SINGING LEAVES: A BALLAD.

J. RUSSELL LOWELL.

I.

'What fairings will ye that I bring?
Said the King to his daughters three;
'For I to Vanity Fair am bound.
Now say what shall they be?'

Then up and spake the eldest daughter,
That lady tall and grand:
'Oh, bring me pearls and diamonds great,
And gold rings for my hand.'

Thereafter spake the second daughter,
That was both white and red:
'For me bring silks that will stand alone,
And a gold comb for my head.'

Then came the turn of the least daughter,
That was whiter than thistle-down,
And among the gold of her blithesome hair
Dim shone the golden crown:

'There came a bird this morning,
And sang 'neath my bower eaves,
Till I dreamed, as his music made me,
"Ask thou for the Singing Leaves."'

Then the brow of the King swelled crimson
With a flush of angry scorn:
'Well have ye spoken, my two eldest,
And chosen as ye were born;

'But she like a thing of peasant race,
That is happy binding the sheaves.'
Then he saw her dead mother in her face,
And said, 'Thou shalt have thy leaves.'

II.

He mounted and rode three days and nights
Till he came to Vanity Fair,
And 'twas easy to buy the gems and the silk,
But no Singing Leaves were there.

Then deep in the greenwood rode he,
And asked of every tree,
'Oh, if you have ever a Singing Leaf,
I pray you give it me!'

But the trees all kept their counsel,
And never a word said they;
Only there sighed from the pine-tops
A music of seas far away.

Only the pattering aspen
Made a sound of growing rain,
That fell ever faster and faster,
Then faltered to silence again.

'Oh, where shall I find a little foot-page
That would win both hose and shoon,
And will bring to me the Singing Leaves
If they grow under the moon?'

Then lightly turned him Walter the page,
By the stirrup as he ran:
'Now pledge ye me the truesome word
Of a king and gentleman,

'That you will give me the first, first thing
You meet at your castle-gate,
And the Princess shall get the Singing Leaves,
Or mine be a traitor's fate.'

The King's head dropt upon his breast
A moment, as it might be;
'Twill be my dog,' he thought, and said,
'My faith I plight to thee.'

Then Walter took from next his heart
A packet small and thin:
'Now give you this to the Princess Anne—
The Singing Leaves are therein.'

III.

As the King rode in at his castle-gate,
A maiden to meet him ran,
And 'Welcome, father!' she laughed and cried
Together, the Princess Anne.

'Lo! here the Singing Leaves,' quoth he;
'And woe, but they cost me dear!'
She took the packet, and the smile
Deepened down beneath the tear.

It deepened down till it reached her heart,
And then gushed up again,
And lighted her tears as the sudden sun
Transfigures the summer rain.

And the first Leaf, when it was opened,
Sang: 'I am Walter the page,
And the songs I sing 'neath thy window
Are my only heritage.'

And the second Leaf sang: 'But in the land
That is neither on earth nor sea,
My lute and I are lords of more
Than thrice this kingdom's fee.'

And the third Leaf sang, 'Be mine! Be mine!'
And ever it sang, 'Be mine!'
Then sweeter it sang and ever sweeter,
And said, 'I am thine, thine, thine!'

At the first Leaf she grew pale enough;
At the second she turned aside;
At the third, 'twas as if a lily flushed
With a rose's red heart's tide.

'Good counsel gave the bird,' said she,
'I have my hope thrice o'er,
For they sing to my very heart,' she said,
'And it sings to them evermore.'

She brought to him her beauty and truth,
But and broad earldoms three;
And he made her queen of the broader lands
He held of his lute in fee.

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## OLD ACE.—Fred Emerson Brooks.

Can any pleasure in life compare
With a charming drive in the balmy air?
A buggy light, with shimmering wheel;
Springs whose resistance you barely feel:
A spirited horse of royal breed,
With just a little more style and speed
Than any you meet, and it matters not
If his gait be pace or a swinging trot.

The tassel sways on the graceful whip;
You grasp the reins with a tighter grip;
Your horse is off for a splendid dash,
And needs no touch of the urging lash.
You feel the puff of the startled air;
It floats his mane and it lifts your hair!
The hoof marks time in its measured beat,
For the swelling nostril that scorns defeat!

One glorious day in the early spring
Jack Dorr was out with his new horse King.
Though both were rich, it was his design
To buy a faster horse than mine.
By his side the sweetest girl in the town,
Of handsome features and eyes so brown
That gazing in where the lashes curled
Was like a view of another world

Where the angel lives and the angel sings,
And she was one that had dropped her wings
And come to earth just to let men see
How sweet the angels in heaven may be!
I envied the breeze its constant bliss
Of passing her cheek to steal a kiss!

I loved the girl when we both were young,
But getting older I 'd lost my tongue.
I learned in college Latin and Greek,
But Cupid's language I could not speak;
While Jack was perfect in Cupid's art,
The only language he knew by heart.
I envied Jack in his ride that day,
And jogged old Ace in an easy way,
That two-mile drive to the sulphur spring,
To test the speed of his new horse King.

Jack took the lead, and it roused his pride;
For the fastest horse and the fairest bride
Had been his boast! Did I pass him by?
My heart, I reckon, could answer why—
I 'm almost certain I lost the race
By lagging behind to look at Grace!
Jack seemed more proud of his horse that day
Than he was of Grace, which made me say,
'Be sure of your game before you boast:
From dead defeat there may rise a ghost!
I 'll race you back to the town,' said I,
'For Gracie's glove!' But he made reply:
'What use to you is the senseless glove
From the soft white hand of the girl I love?
Suppose you win,' he laughed in my face,
'You get the mitten and I get Grace!'

Jack laughed away till his eyes were wet:
'Increase the wager; I 'll take the bet!'
'My glove,' said Grace, 'and the hand within,
Shall be the prize of the one to win!'

I looked at Jack, but he didn't chaff,
He didn't smile, and he didn't laugh!
'Must I, then, race you for such a bride,'
Said Jack, 'and carry the load beside?'

'I 'll carry,' said I, 'the precious load!'
Her bright eye flashed and her fair cheek glowed!
She took her seat with little ado;
I tucked the robe and my heart in too!
Said I, 'Old Ace!' as I stroked his neck,
And rubbed his nose, and loosened his check,
'She 's Bob's own Grace if you do your best!'
He pricked his ears just as if he guessed
The time had come when his master's need
Had staked all happiness on his speed.

When all was ready Grace shouted 'Go!'
A word both horses seemed to know.
You heard the hoof with its measured sway
Pacing along the great highway.
You saw the swell of the panting side,
The pink that glows in the nostril wide.
No word was spoken between us two:
The tongue is silent when hope is new.
A mile, a mile and a half, we sped,
And still the King was a neck ahead.

Jack touched his horse with the tasselled whip;
Then Gracie, pursing her rosy lip,
Uttered a sound like a lover's kiss—pss—ss! pss—ss!
The world is ruled by a sound like this!
To urge a horse a capital plan,
And often used to encourage man!
But she never dreamed she had let me in
To her heart's fond wish that I should win.

The only time in the race she spoke
Was when, over-urged, Jack's trotter broke:

'He 's running his horse, and that 's not fair!'
And, blushing up to her auburn hair,
She grabbed the whip from my willing hand—
A move that Jack seemed to understand;
For she raised it high as much as to say,
'Well, running 's a game that two can play!'
So he brought him down to an honest pace,
But couldn't keep up with dear old Ace,
Who forged ahead when he saw the whip,
And passed the stake with never a skip.

On through the village he kept his speed,
For I was too happy to mind the steed;
He would not stop when the race was done,
But started home with the prize he 'd won!
Nor stopped till he reached the farmhouse gate,
Where good old mother was sure to wait.

I know the horse is a trifle old,
But you can't buy him with all your gold!
My Gracie loves him, and pats his back,
And says he 's the best card in the pack,
And rubs his nose till he kisses her face.
He understands, does dear old Ace,
As she smiling says, 'It 's the proper thing
To love the Ace that beat the King!'
And she purses her lips for the well-known smack—
'I 'm glad the Queen didn't take the Jack!'

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## PHAUDHRIG CROHOORE.—J. S. Le Fanu.

Oh! Phaudhrig Crohoore was the broth of a boy,
And he stood six feet eight;
And his arm was as round as another man's thigh—
'Tis Phaudhrig was great!
And his hair was as black as the shadows of night,
And hung over the scars left by many a fight;

And his voice, like the thunder, was deep, sthrong, an' loud,
And his eye like the lightnin' from under the cloud.
And all the girls liked him, for he could speak civil
And sweet when he chose it—without thought of evil.
An' there wasn't a girl, from thirty-five under,
No matter how cross, but he could come round her.
But of all the sweet girls that smiled on him, but one
Was the girl of his heart, an' he loved her alone.
An' warm as the sun, as the rock firm an' sure,
Was the love of the heart of Phaudhrig Crohoore;
An' he'd die for one smile from his Kathleen O'Brien,
For his love, like his hatred, was strong as a lion.

But Michael O'Hanlon loved Kathleen as well
As he hated Crohoore—deep as old ocean's swell!
But O'Brien liked him, for they were the same parties—
The O'Briens, O'Hanlons, an' Murphys, an' Cartys;
An' they all went together an' hated Crohoore,
For it 's many 's the batin' he gave them before.
An' O'Hanlon made up to O'Brien, an' says he,
'I 'll marry your daughter if you 'll give her to me.'
An' the match was made up, an' Shrovetide came on,
The company assimbled, three hundred if one—
There was all the O'Hanlons an' Murphys an' Cartys,
An' the young boys an' girls av all o' them parties.
An' the O'Briens, av coorse, gathered sthrong on that day,
An' the pipers an' fiddlers were tearin' away;
There was roarin', an' jumpin', an' jiggin', an' flingin',
An' jokin', an' blessin', an' kissin', an' singin'.
An' they all were a-laughin'—why not, to be sure?—
How O'Hanlon came inside of Phaudhrig Crohoore!
An' they all talked an' laughed the length of the table,
Aitin' an' dhrinkin' the while they were able;
An' with pipin', an' fiddlin', an' roarin' like thunder,
Your head you 'd think fairly was splittin' asunder.
An' the priest called out: 'Silence, ye blackguards agin!'
An' he took up his prayer-book, just goin' to begin.
An' they all held their tongues from their funnin' an' bawlin';

So silent you 'd notice the smallest pin fallin'!
An' the priest just beginnin' to read—when the door
Sprung back to the wall, an' in walked Crohoore.
Oh! Phaudhrig Crohoore was the broth of a boy,
An' he stood six feet eight;
An' his arm was as round as another man's thigh—
'Tis Phaudhrig was great!
An' he walked slowly up, watched by many a bright eye,
As a black cloud moves on through the stars of the sky.
An' none strove to stop him, for Phaudhrig was great,
Till he stood all alone, just opposite the sate .
Where O'Hanlon an' Kathleen, his beautiful bride,
Were sittin' so illigant out side by side.
An' he gave her one look that her heart almost broke,
An' he turned to O'Brien, her father, an' spoke;
An' his voice, like the thunder, was deep, sthrong, an' loud,
An' his eyes shone like lightnin' from under the cloud:
'I didn't come here like a tame crawlin' mouse,
But I stand like a man in my inimy's house;
In the field, on the road, Phaudhrig never knew fear
Of his foemen, an' God knows he scorns it here.
So lave me at aise for three minutes or four
To spake to the girl I 'll never see more.'
An' to Kathleen he turned, an' his voice changed its tone,
For he thought of the days when he called her his own.
An' his eye blazed like lightnin' from under the cloud
On his false-hearted girl, reproachful an' proud.
An' says he, 'Kathleen bawn, is it thrue what I hear,
That you marry of your free choice, without threat or fear?
If so, spake the word, an' I 'll turn an' depart,
Chated once, an' once only, by woman's false heart.'
Oh! sorrow an' love made the poor girl quite dumb,
An' she tried hard to spake, but the words wouldn't come;
For the sound of his voice, as he stood there fornint her,
Wint cold on her heart as the night wind in winther;
An' the tears in her blue eyes stood tremblin' to flow,
An' pale was her cheek as the moonshine on snow.
Then the heart of bould Phaudhrig swelled high in its place,

For he knew, by one look in that beautiful face,
That though sthrangers an' foemen their pledged hands might sever,
Her true heart was his, an' his only, for ever!
In his arms he took Kathleen an' stepped to the door,
And he leaped on his horse, an' flung her before;
An' they all were so bothered that not a man stirred
Till the gallopin' hoofs on the pavement was heard.
Then up they all started, like bees in the swarm,
An' they riz a great shout, like the burst of a storm,
An' they roared, an' they ran, an' they shouted galore;
But Kathleen an' Phaudhrig they never saw more.

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## LEFT ASHORE.—Harriet Prescott Spofford.

Softly it stole up out of the sea,
The day that brought my dole to me;
Slowly into the star-sown gray
Dim and dappled it soared away.
Who would have dreamed such tender light
Was brimming over with bale and blight?
Who would have dreamed that fitful breeze
Fanned from the tumult of tossing seas?
Oh, softly and slowly stole up from the sea
The day that brought my dole to me.

Glad was I at the open door,
While my footfall lingered along the floor,
For three bright heads at that dawn of day
Close on the self-same pillow lay;
Three dear mouths I bent and kissed
As the gold and rose and amethyst
Of the eastern sky was round us spread;
And three little happy faces sped
To the dancing boat—and he went too—
And lightly the wind that morning blew.

Many a time had one and all
Gone out before to the deep-sea haul;
Many a time come rowing back
Against the tide of the Merrimac,
With shining freight, and a reddening sail
Flapping loose in the idle gale;
While over them faded the evening glow,
With stars above and with stars below;
Trolling and laughing a welcome din
To me and the warm shore making in.

Then why, that day, as I watched the boat,
Did I remember the midnight rote
That rolled a signal across my sleep
Of the storm that rolled from deep to deep,
Plunging along in its eager haste
Across the desert and desolate waste,
Far off through the heart of the gray mid seas
To rob me for ever of all my ease?
Oh, I know not; I only know
That sound was the warning of my woe.

For, lo! as I looked, I saw the mist
Over the channel curl and twist,
And blot the breaker out of sight
Where its angry horn gored the waters white.
Only a sea-turn, I heard them say,
That the climbing sun will burn away;
But I saw it silently settling down
Like an ashen pall upon the town.
'Oh, hush!' I cried; ''tis some huge storm's rack,
And I know my darlings will never come back.'

All day I stood on the old sea-wall
Watching the great swell rise and fall,
And the spume and spray drove far and thin,
But never a sail came staggering in.
And out of the east a wet wind blew,
And over my head the foam-flakes flew;

Down came the night without a star;
Loud was the cry of the raging bar;
And I wrung my hands and called and prayed,
And the black, wild east all answer made.

Oh, long ere the cruel night was done
Came the muffled roll of the minute gun.
Nothing it meant to me, I knew,
Save that other women were waiting too.
For many the craft that, cast away
On the shoals of the long Plum Island, lay
Wrecked and naked, a hungry horde
Of fierce white surges leaping aboard;
And bale and bundle came up from the sea,
But nothing ever came back to me.

And through every pool where the full tides toss
I search for some lock of curling floss.
Yet still in my window, night by night,
The little candle is burning bright.
For, oh, if I suddenly turned to meet
My darlings coming with flying feet,
While I, in the place they left me, sat,
No greater marvel 'twould be than that
When so softly, slowly stole up from the sea
The day that brought my dole to me.

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## A PARABLE.—James Russell Lowell.

Said Christ our Lord, 'I will go and see
How the men, My brethren, believe in Me.'
He passed not again through the gate of birth,
But made Himself known to the children of earth.

Then said the chief priests and rulers and kings,
'Behold now the Giver of all good things;
Go to, let us welcome with pomp and state
Him who alone is mighty and great.'

With carpets of gold the ground they spread
Wherever the Son of Man should tread,
And in palace-chambers lofty and rare
They lodged Him, and served Him with kingly fare.

Great organs surged through arches dim
Their jubilant floods in praise of Him,
And in church and palace and judgment-hall
He saw His image high over all.

But still, wherever His steps they led,
The Lord in sorrow bent down His head;
And from under the heavy foundation-stones
The Son of Mary heard bitter groans.

And in church and palace and judgment-hall
He marked great fissures that rent the wall,
And opened wider and yet more wide
As the living foundation heaved and sighed.

'Have ye founded your thrones and altars, then,
On the bodies and souls of living men?
And think ye that building shall endure
Which shelters the noble and crushes the poor?

'With gates of silver and bars of gold
Ye have fenced My sheep from their Father's fold:
I have heard the dropping of their tears,
In heaven, these eighteen hundred years.'

'O Lord and Master, not ours the guilt,
We build but as our fathers built;
Behold Thine images, how they stand,
Sovereign and sole, through all our land.

'Our task is hard—with sword and flame
To hold Thy earth for ever the same,
And with sharp crooks of steel to keep
Still, as Thou leftest them, Thy sheep.'

Then Christ sought out an artisan—
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man,
And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

These set He in the midst of them;
And as they drew back their garment-hem
For fear of defilement, 'Lo! here,' said He,
'The images ye have made of Me!'

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## MISS KILMANSEGG'S ACCIDENT.—THOMAS HOOD.

The horse that carried Miss Kilmansegg—
And a better never lifted leg—
Was a very rich bay, called Banker;
A horse of a breed and a mettle so rare—
By Bullion out of an Ingot mare—
That for action, the best of figures, and air,
It made many good judges hanker.

And when she took a ride in the Park,
Equestrian Lord, or pedestrian Clerk,
Was thrown in an amorous fever,
To see the Heiress how well she sat,
With her groom behind her, Bob or Nat,
In green, half-smothered with gold, and a hat
With more gold lace than beaver.

And then when Banker obtained a pat,
To see how he arched his neck at that!
He snorted with pride and pleasure!
Like the Steed in the fable, so lofty and grand,
Who gave the poor Ass to understand
That he didn't carry a bag of sand,
But a burden of golden treasure.

A load of treasure?—alas! alas!
Had her horse but been fed upon English grass
And sheltered in Yorkshire spinneys,
Had he scoured the sand with the Desert Ass,
Or where the American whinnies—
But a hunter from Erin's turf and gorse,
A regular thoroughbred Irish horse;
Why, he ran away, as a matter of course,
With a girl worth her weight in guineas!

Mayhap 'tis the trick of such pampered nags
To shy at the sight of a beggar in rags;
But away, like the bolt of a rabbit,
Away went the horse in the madness of fright,
And away went the horsewoman mocking the sight—
Was yonder blue flash a flash of blue light,
Or only the skirt of her habit?

Away she flies, with her groom behind—
It looks like a race of the Calmuck kind,
When Hymen himself is the starter;
And the Maid rides first in the four-footed strife,
Riding, striding, as if for her life,
While the Lover rides after to catch him a wife,
Although it 's catching a Tartar.

But the Groom has lost his glittering hat!
Though he does not sigh and pull up for that—
Alas! his horse is a tit for Tat,
To sell to a very low bidder;
His wind is ruined, his shoulder is sprung,
Things, though a horse be well-bred and young,
A purchaser will consider.

But still flies the Heiress through stones and dust:
Oh, for a fall, if fall she must,
On the gentle lap of Flora!

But still, thank Heaven ! she clings to her seat—
Away ! away ! she could ride a dead heat
With the Dead who ride so fast and fleet
In the Ballad of Leonora !

Away she gallops !—it 's awful work !
It 's faster than Turpin's ride to York
On Bess, that notable clipper !
She has circled the Ring ! she crosses the Park !
Mazeppa, although he was stripped so stark—
Mazeppa couldn't outstrip her !

The fields seem running away with the folks !
The Elms are having a race for the Oaks
At a pace that all jockeys disparages !
All, all is racing ! the Serpentine
Seems rushing past like the ' arrowy Rhine ; '
The houses have got on a railway line,
And are off like the first-class carriages !

She 'll lose her life ! she is losing her breath !
A cruel chase, she is chasing Death,
As female shriekings forewarn her :
And now—as fearless as blood of Guelph—
She clears that gate, which has cleared itself
Since then, at Hyde Park Corner !

Alas ! for the hope of the Kilmanseggs !
For her head, her brains, her body, and legs,
Her life 's not worth a copper !
Willy-nilly,
In Piccadilly,
A hundred hearts turn sick and chilly,
A hundred voices cry ' Stop her ! '
And one old gentleman stares and stands,
Shakes his head, and lifts his hands,
And says, ' How very improper ! '

On and on!—what a perilous run!
The iron rails seem all mingling in one,
  To shut out the Green Park scenery!
And now the Cellar its dangers reveals,
She shudders—she shrieks—she's doomed, she feels,
To be torn by powers of horses and wheels,
  Like a spinner by steam machinery!

Sick with horror she shuts her eyes,
But the very stones seem uttering cries,
  As they did to that Persian daughter
When she climbed up the steep vociferous hill
Her little silver flagon to fill
  With the magical Golden Water!

'Batter her! shatter her!
  Throw and scatter her!'
Shouts each stony-hearted chatterer.
  'Dash at the heavy Dover!
Spill her! kill her! tear and tatter her!
Smash her! crash her!' (the stones didn't flatter her!)
'Kick her brains out! let her blood spatter her!
  Roll on her over and over!'

For so she gathered the awful sense
Of the street in its past unmacadamised tense,
  As the wild horse overran it—
His four heels making the clatter of six,
Like Devil's tattoo, played with iron sticks
  On a kettle-drum of granite!

On! still on! she's dazzled with hints
Of oranges, ribbons, and coloured prints,
A Kaleidoscope jumble of shapes and tints,
  And human faces all flashing,
Bright and brief as the sparks from the flints,
  That the desperate hoof keeps dashing!

On and on! still frightfully fast!
Dover Street, Bond Street, all are past!
But—yes—no—yes!—they 're down at last!
The Furies and Fates have found them!
Down they go with a sparkle and crash,
Like a Bark that 's struck by the lightning flash—
There 's a shriek—and a sob—
And the dense, dark mob
Like a billow closes around them!

. . . . . .

'She breathes!'
'She don't!'
'She 'll recover!'
'She won't!'
'She 's stirring! she 's living, by Nemesis!'
Gold, still Gold! on counter and shelf!
Golden dishes as plenty as delf!
Miss Kilmansegg 's coming again to herself
On an opulent Goldsmith's premises!

Gold! fine Gold!—both yellow and red,
Beaten, and molten—polished, and dead—
To see the gold with profusion spread
In all forms of its manufacture!
But what avails gold to Miss Kilmansegg,
When the femoral bone of her dexter leg
Has met with a compound fracture?

Gold may soothe Adversity's smart,
Nay, help to bind up a broken heart;
But to try it on any other part
Were as certain a disappointment
As if one should rub the dish and plate
Taken out of a Staffordshire crate—
In the hope of a Golden Service of State—
With Singleton's 'Golden Ointment.'

## CONDUCTOR BRADLEY.—John Greenleaf Whittier.

Conductor Bradley (always may his name
Be said with reverence !), as the swift doom came,
Smitten to death, a crushed and mangled frame,

Sank, with the brake he grasped just where he stood
To do the utmost that a brave man could,
And die, if needful, as a true man should.

Men stooped above him ; women dropped their tears
On that poor wreck beyond all hopes or fears,
Lost in the strength and glory of his years.

What heard they ? Lo ! the ghastly lips of pain,
Dead to all thought save duty's, moved again :
'Put out the signals for the other train !'

No nobler utterance since the world began
From lips of saint or martyr ever ran,
Electric, through the sympathies of man.

Ah, me ! how poor and noteless seem to this
The sick-bed dramas of self-consciousness,
Our sensual fears of pain and hopes of bliss !

Oh, grand, supreme endeavour ! Not in vain
That last brave act of failing tongue and brain !
Freighted with life the downward rushing train,

Following the wrecked one, as wave follows wave,
Obeyed the warning which the dead lips gave.
Others he saved, himself he could not save.

Nay, the lost life *was* saved. He is not dead
Who in his record still the earth shall tread
With God's clear aureole shining round his head.

We bow as in the dust, with all our pride
Of virtue dwarfed the noble deed beside.
God give us grace to live as Bradley died !

## WILD WEATHER OUTSIDE.—Margaret E. Sangster.

Wild weather outside where the brave ships go,
And fierce from all quarters the four winds blow;
Wild weather and cold, and the great waves swell
With chasms beneath them as black as hell.
The waters frolic in Titan play,
They dash the decks with an icy spray,
The spent sails shiver, the lithe masts reel,
And the sheeted ropes are as smooth as steel.
And, oh, that the sailor were safe once more
Where the sweet wife smiles in the cottage door!

The little cottage, it shines afar
O'er the lurid seas like the polar star.
The mariner tossed in the jaws of death
Hurls at the storm a defiant breath;
Shouts to his mates through the writhing foam,
'Courage! please God, we shall yet win home!'
Frozen and haggard, and wan and gray,
But resolute still; 'tis the sailor's way.
And perhaps—at the fancy the stern eyes dim—
Somebody 's praying to-night for him.

Ah, me! through the drench of the bitter rain,
How bright the picture that rises plain!
Sure he can see, with her merry look,
His little maid crooning her spelling-book;
The baby crows from the cradle fair;
The grandam nods in her easy-chair;
While hither and thither, with quiet grace,
A woman flits with an earnest face.
The kitten purrs, and the kettle sings,
And a nameless comfort the picture brings.

Rough weather outside, but the winds of balm
For ever float o'er that isle of calm.
O friends, who read over tea and toast
Of the wild night's work on the storm-swept coast,

Think, when the vessels are overdue,
Of the perilous voyage, the baffled crew,
Of stout hearts battling for love and home
'Mid the cruel blasts and the curdling foam;
And breathe a prayer from your happy lips
For those who 'go down to the sea in ships;'
Ask that the sailor may stand once more
Where the sweet wife smiles in the cottage door.

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## THE DEATH OF CROMWELL.—JAMES PAYN.

The wind was up and wild that night
On flood and field and fell;
Untouched by man, from each church-tower
There pealed a passing bell;
At midnight, all the land rang out
The great Protector's knell.

The walls a solemn anthem rolled;
The forests bent and brake;
The moon was hid; the stars were quenched;
The wasted earth did quake:
'Twas meet God's every work should show
When God that soul did take.

And all men stood, like sentinels
Who hear about their post
The ring of spear, the beat of hoof,
The clang of charging host;
But wist not if 'tis friend or foe,
Nor who hath won or lost.

And far beyond the tossing seas,
That tempest tore the vine,
And whirled their snows from Alps to Alps,
And levelled low the pine;
For all that dwelt in Christendom,
'Twas meet, should see the sign.

But round his rocking palace-gates,
The great Protector's guard,
The men that had no chief but one,
Still kept their watch and ward,
And prayed so loud and earnestly,
The tempest scarce was heard;

For well they knew him near to death,
Their tried and trusted friend,
Their leader in a hundred fields,
And matchless to the end.
God had not, to their iron arms
Another such to send,

Whose name was dreadful on the Earth,
And dreadful on the Main,
'Neath whose broad shield God's people couched,
Nor put their trust in vain
In him who taught Rome charity,
And bent the knee of Spain.

As, through that night, from hour to hour,
The preachers, grave and sad,
Came forth from where great Cromwell lay,
With what dark news they had,
Did each stern veteran weep to hear,
As weeps some orphan lad.

'This night is our great general's last,
A death-time fit and rare
For him who gave to God the praise,
And whom God gave the war.
This is the night of Worcester field,
Brave comrades, and Dunbar;

'And lo! his thoughts are with you now,
The chosen of the Lord.
His brows are knit, his hands are clenched,
He dreams he grasps the sword.

"Let us go down to Gilgal, men,"
Was his last spoken word.

'This morn he saw the sun break forth
As on that Dunbar day,
And strove to prop him on his arm,
To meet the broad, bright ray;
"And let the Lord arise," had said,
But had not strength to say;

'But we spoke for him to the end;
All noontide wrestled we;
But since the tempest first was stirred,
His heart is back with *ye*.
And now he cries: "They charge! they charge!"
And now: "They flee! they flee!"'

Hark! hushed is every breath of air!
Marked ye this sudden lull?
How star by star comes forth in peace
To meet the moon at full?
Great Cromwell's soul is otherwhere,
And other realms doth rule.

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## A NEWPORT ROMANCE.—Bret Harte.

They say that she died of a broken heart
(I tell the tale as 'twas told to me);
But her spirit lives, and her soul is part
Of this sad old house by the sea.

Her lover was fickle and fine and French;
It was nearly a hundred years ago
When he sailed away from her arms—poor wench!
With the Admiral Rochambeau.

I marvel much what periwigged phrase
  Won the heart of this sentimental Quaker,
At what golden-laced speech of those modish days
  She listened—the mischief take her!

But she kept the posies of mignonette
  That he gave; and ever as their bloom failed
And faded (though with her tears still wet)
  Her youth with their own exhaled.

Till one night, when the sea-fog wrapped a shroud
  Round spar and spire and tarn and tree,
Her soul went up on that lifted cloud
  From this sad old house by the sea.

And ever since then, when the clock strikes two,
  She walks unbidden from room to room,
And the air is filled that she passes through
  With a subtile, sad perfume.

The delicate odour of mignonette,
  The ghost of a dead and gone bouquet,
Is all that tells of her story; yet
  Could she think of a sweeter way?

. . . . .

I sit in the sad old house to-night—
  Myself a ghost from a farther sea;
And I trust that this Quaker woman might,
  In courtesy, visit me.

For the laugh is fled from porch and lawn,
  And the bugle died from the fort on the hill,
And the twitter of girls on the stairs is gone,
  And the grand piano is still.

Somewhere in the darkness a clock strikes two;
  And there is no sound in the sad old house,
But the long veranda dripping with dew,
  And in the wainscot a mouse.

The light of my study-lamp streams out
From the library door, but has gone astray
In the depths of the darkened hall. Small doubt
But the Quakeress knows the way.

Was it the trick of a sense o'erwrought
With outward watching and inward fret?
But I swear that the air just now was fraught
With the odour of mignonette!

I open the window, and seem almost—
So still lies the ocean—to hear the beat
Of its Great Gulf artery off the coast,
And to bask in its tropic heat.

In my neighbour's windows the gas-lights flare,
As the dancers swing in a waltz of Strauss;
And I wonder now could I fit that air
To the song of this sad old house.

And no odour of mignonette there is
On the dewy lawn but the breath of morn;
And mayhap from causes as slight as this
The quaint old legend is born.

But the soul of that subtile, sad perfume,
As the spiced embalmings, they say, outlast
The mummy laid in his rocky tomb,
Awakens my buried past.

And I think of the passion that shook my youth,
Of its aimless loves and its idle pains,
And am thankful now for the certain truth
That only the sweet remains.

And I hear no rustle of stiff brocade,
And I see no face at my library door;
For now that the ghosts of my heart are laid,
She is viewless for evermore.

But whether she came as a faint perfume,
Or whether a spirit in stole of white,
I feel, as I pass from the darkened room,
She has been with my soul to-night!

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## THE REQUITAL.—Adelaide A. Procter.

Loud roared the tempest,
Fast fell the sleet;
A little Child Angel
Passed down the street,
With trailing pinions
And weary feet.

The moon was hidden;
No stars were bright;
So she could not shelter
In heaven that night,
For the Angels' ladders
Are rays of light.

She beat her wings
At each window pane,
And pleaded for shelter,
But all in vain:—
'Listen,' they said,
'To the pelting rain!'

She sobbed, as the laughter
And mirth grew higher,
'Give me rest and shelter
Beside your fire,
And I will give you
Your heart's desire.'

The dreamer sat watching
His embers gleam,

While his heart was floating
Down hope's bright stream;
. . . So he wove her wailing
Into his dream.

The worker toiled on,
For his time was brief;
The mourner was nursing
Her own pale grief:
They heard not the promise
That brought relief.

But fiercer the tempest
Rose than before,
When the Angel paused
At a humble door,
And asked for shelter
And help once more.

A weary woman,
Pale, worn, and thin,
With the brand upon her
Of want and sin,
Heard the Child Angel,
And took her in.

Took her in gently,
And did her best
To dry her pinions;
And made her rest
With tender pity
Upon her breast.

When the eastern morning
Grew bright and red,
Up the first sunbeam
The Angel fled;
Having kissed the woman
And left her—dead.

(By kind permission of Messrs G. Bell & Sons.)

## THE BUSTER.—Sam Walter Foss.

His name was Alexander Bartholomew M'Kay;
That was his 'really truly' name, the youngsters used to say;
A name to which the future years, we hoped, would lend a lustre,
But then his name for every day was simply this—
The Buster.

The Buster was a cyclone dressed in a roundabout,
A whirlwind dressed in pantalettes, full steam and just let out.
And wheresoe'er The Buster went did ruin always cluster;
Upon the chaos that he made we 'd gaze and sigh—
'The Buster!'

A track of devastation always followed in his wake,
For everything The Buster touched The Buster he would break.
It took all Christian charity our outraged souls could muster
To live in the same edifice where domiciled
The Buster.

He 'd hang the chairs upon the wall, the pictures on the floor,
And hang the poodle upside down upon the cellar door;
And slyly dress the baby up in gran'pa's linen duster,
And hitch the goat in Nell's boudoir and leave him there—
The Buster.

And no one asked The Buster's health, for all men understood
The Buster's chronic state of health was dangerously good;
But one day his soft cheek grew pale, his bright eye lost its lustre,
And we gathered round his tiny crib to see what ailed
The Buster.

And when the fever reached his brain he wandered in his mind,
And played imaginary pranks—the same old reckless kind;
He sang his little rattling songs while all about did cluster,
They cheered his long way through the dark, the long way of
The Buster.

For he had started on that way—the mists grew cold and colder—
And no strong man, no hero soul, e'er marched upon it bolder;
He 'd heard the call which summons all to Fate's eternal muster,
And with a smile upon his lips he answered back—
The Buster.

And so we watched The Buster, standing by with bated breath,
As with sweet laughter in his eyes he neared the gates of death;
And when he said 'Doo-bye' to us we round his crib did cluster,
And thought how much we loved our boy—how good he was—
The Buster.

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## DAGOBERT THE JESTER.—ANON.

The Princess was queenly and fair in face,
And she was the last of a royal race.

From far and near came her suitors proud,
But she looked at none in that goodly crowd.

Nineteen summers had passed away,
And she knew nothing of Love's sweet sway.

Nor prince, nor knight, nor gentle squire
Could light in her breast the sacred fire.

'It were best for the people that thou shouldst wed,
And raise up princes,' the graybeards said.

But no man moved that heart of stone,
And the Princess lived and ruled alone.

Yet oft to herself she whispered low:
'A time will come, be time swift or slow,
When my heart to its master must outward go.

'Never a man have I seen as yet
That could fill my heart with Love's regret.

'All men bow in my presence the knee;
But he who weds me my king must be,

'And him will I serve each hour and day,
And own myself conquered in Love's sweet sway

'For love is worth nor tittle nor jot
If the husband no power to rule has got!'

She sat in her palace one sweet spring day,
And idled the afternoon hours away.

She called to a maiden who lingered there:
'Go, fetch me the jester Dagobert.'

The jester came, with his serious face,
And a shadow fell on the sunlit place.

Misshapen and stunted and crabbed was he;
As sorry a jester as well could be!

His great head fell on his pointed chest,
And a grievous hump on his shoulders prest;

His small eyes gleamed through his shaggy hair:
Such was the jester Dagobert.

The Princess beckoned him near her feet,
But her glance knew nothing of pity sweet.

'Thou art a man of ready wit:
Come, tell me the reason and meaning of it.

'Oft I have said that no man's power
Hath rested on me a single hour,

'And yet for three days past my soul
Hath felt the might of a man's control.'

*What sound was that in the perfumed air?*
*A sigh from the jester Dagobert.*

'Speak, my Princess, and tell me all—
Who holds thy heart at his beck and call?'

'Neither his name nor his race I know,
Nor who is he that enthrals me so.'

'Strange, my Princess, thy story seems.
Is it some creature of maiden dreams?'

'Nay, but for three nights past my ears
Have heard a voice that can move my tears.

'He sings of war and of mighty deeds;
And under it all his own love pleads.'

*What was it that stirred the silent air?*
*A sigh from the jester Dagobert.*

'Where, my Princess, was this strange thing?
And whence did he come for thy pleasure to sing?'

'Where or whence I little know;
But my heart keeps saying "*I love him so!*"

'Three nights past he has sung beneath
My window of Love that will last till death.

'His voice is the voice of a man so brave
That I would follow him to his grave.

'And I—I listen, and long to reply:
"I love thee, I love thee until I die!"'

*What was that in the heavy air?*
*A groan from the jester Dagobert.*

'Thou art a man of ready wit;
Come, tell me the meaning and reason of it.'

In the jester's eyes there lurked a flame,
And he bit his lip till the red blood came.

His body shivered, and underneath
The unkempt beard he ground his teeth;

And sudden he answered: 'A fool's poor wit
Can see no meaning or reason in it.

'Find the meaning thyself, nor try
To coax love-nonsense from such as I.'

Over her face flashed the angry blood,
And she struck the jester where he stood.

At the touch of her fingers he shivered again;
But it was not the blow that caused his pain.

'Go!' she cried, 'to thy bells and cap!
What knowest thou of Love's sweet hap?

'What Love is, and what Love can be,
Is all unguessed by a thing like thee.

'How shouldst thou, in thy ugliness,
Ever the might of Love confess?

'Love is for those that are fair and free,
Not for misshapen things like thee!'

He shrank away to his chattering ape,
A poor, ill-favoured, and fearful shape.

He leaned his head on his hands, and knew
That the cruel words were more than true.

And the only sounds in the silent air
Were the sighs of the jester Dagobert.

The Princess stood at her window that night;
There was no light there but the pale starlight.

Far below, in the evening breeze,
She heard the rustle of waving trees.

Sudden a voice through the silence rang:
Of Love that will last till death it sang.

And all through the wonderful ebb and flow
A voice repeated, '*I love thee so!*'

She leaned through the casement, and closed her eyes,
And fancied her soul in Paradise.

And sudden the song died out, and her ears
Caught the sobs of one in a passion of tears!

The Princess sat on her father's throne,
And looked on the halls that were all her own.

Each was filled with a moving throng
Of courtiers threading their way along.

Lord and lady of high degree
Were there in their pride and their bravery.

And the Princess was decked with jewels rare,
And diamonds gleamed in her sunny hair,
And she was the fairest woman there.

She rose from her throne, and the voices hushed,
And her dark eye gleamed and her fair face flushed,

And her beauty increased and grew, no less
Because of her maidenly bashfulness.

Then to the graybeards round she said:
'Oft ye have told me that I must wed;

'But never there came across my way
A man who could hold my heart in sway.

'Yet now I would have you all to know
That my heart to its master must outward go.

'Four nights now 'neath my palace wall
I have heard a voice, and have felt its thrall.

'And, oh! if the singer among you be,
Let him come forth and marry with me!'

Silence fell on the wondering crowd
As they gazed at the Princess fair and proud,
Whose heart by the power of Love was bowed.

But no voice answered from out the throng
In the tones that had chanted that witching song.

'Oh, let him speak!' she cried; 'for, lo!
He has chained my heart, and I love him so!'

She stood with her hand stretched out so fair,
And looked for his coming to claim her there.

And sudden there rose a strange, fierce cry
From the daïs behind her: '*It was I.*'

And out there stepped from a sheltering chair
The humpbacked jester Dagobert!

Then a voice arose in the wondering hall,
That was full of gibe in its mocking call:
'Sing us the song that can so enthral!'

And into the midst of the perfumed air
Soared the voice of the jester Dagobert.

It told of the years of sorrow and pain,
And the ceaseless thoughts of the scheming brain;

It told of the love that breathed and burned
In the shapeless body by all men spurned;

It told how the heart was brave and true
To the love and passion that in it grew;

And because of its passionate, fierce regret,
The eyes of many with tears were wet.

It ceased, and the jester raised his face
And looked at the Princess of noble race.

Would she remember his pain and woe,
And come to his side with '*I love thee so*'?

She turned away with a glance of scorn;
And the hunchback's love died out in its morn.

But, suddenly springing, he caught her hand:
'*I* was the king that could thee command!'

And, for one brief moment of passionate bliss,
He pressed her lips with a burning kiss.

Swords flashed out in the courtier crowd,
And the murmurs of hate were fierce and loud:

'He dies, the varlet! Ho, draw him apart!'
But he drove his own dagger right through his heart.

And ere any could reach him the life was fled
From the shapeless body and shaggy head.

Out into the starlight, pure and fair,
Passed the soul of the jester Dagobert.

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## BEN HAZZARD'S GUESTS.—Anna P. Marshall.

Ben Hazzard's hut was smoky and cold,
Ben Hazzard, half-blind, was weak and old,
And he cobbled shoes for his scanty gold.
Sometimes he sighed for a larger store
Wherewith to bless the wandering poor;
For he was not wise in worldly lore—
The poor were Christ's, he knew no more.
One night a cry from the window came—
Ben Hazzard was sleepy and tired and lame—
'Ben Hazzard, open,' it seemed to say;
'Give shelter and food, I humbly pray.'
Ben Hazzard lifted his old gray head
To listen. 'Tis very cold,' he said,
And his old frame shook in his cheerless bed,
'But the wanderer must be comforted.'
Out from his straw he painfully crept,
And over the frosty floor he stept,
While under the door the snow-wreaths swept.
'Come in, in the name of the Lord,' he cried,
As he opened the door and held it wide.
A milk-white kitten was all he spied,
Trembling and crying there at his feet,
Ready to die in the bitter sleet.
Ben Hazzard, amazed, stared up and down;
The candles were out in all the town;

The stout house-doors were carefully shut,
Safe bolted were all but old Ben's hut.
'I thought that somebody called,' he said;
'Some dream or other got into my head.
Come, then, poor pussy, and share my bed.'
But first he sought for a rusty cup,
And gave his guest a generous sup.
Then out from the storm, the wind, and the sleet,
Puss joyfully lay at old Ben's feet.
Truly it was a terrible storm;
Ben feared he should nevermore be warm.
But just as he began to be dozy,
And puss was purring soft and cosy,
A voice called faintly before his door:
'Ben Hazzard, Ben Hazzard, help, I implore!
Give drink, and a crust from out your store.'
Ben Hazzard opened his sleepy eyes,
And his wrinkled face showed great surprise.
Out from his bed he stumbled again,
Teeth chattering with neuralgic pain,
Caught at the door in the frozen rain.
'Come in, in the name of the Lord,' he said;
'With such as I have thou shalt be fed.'
Only a little black dog he saw
Whining and shaking a broken paw.
'Well, well,' cried Ben Hazzard, 'I must have dreamed,
But verily like a voice it seemed.
Poor creature,' he added, with husky tone,
His feet so cold they seemed like stone,
'Thou shalt have the whole of my marrow-bone.'
He went to the cupboard, and took from the shelf
The bone he had saved for his very self.
Then, after binding the broken paw,
Half-dead with cold, went back to his straw.
Under the ancient blue bed-quilt he crept;
His conscience was white, again he slept;
But again a voice called, both loud and clear:
'Ben Hazzard, for Christ's sweet sake, come here!'

Once more he stood at the open door,
And looked abroad, as he looked before,
This time full sure 'twas a voice he heard;
But all that he saw was a storm-tossed bird,
With weary pinion and beaten crest,
And a red blood-stain on his snowy breast.
'Come in, in the name of the Lord,' he said,
Tenderly raising the drooping head,
And tearing his tattered coat apart,
Laid the cold bird on his own warm heart.
The sunrise flashed on the snowy thatch
As an angel lifted the wooden latch;
Ben woke in a flood of golden light,
And knew the voice that had called all night,
And steadfastly gazing, without a word,
Beheld the messenger from the Lord.
He said to Ben, with a wondrous smile,
The three guests sleeping all the while:
'Thrice happy is he that blesseth the poor;
The humblest creatures that sought thy door,
For Christ's sweet sake thou hast comforted.'
'Nay, 'twas not much,' Ben humbly said,
With a rueful shake of his old gray head.'
'Who giveth all of his scanty store,
In Christ's dear name, can do no more.
Behold, the Master who waiteth for thee
Saith, "Giving to them, thou hast given to Me!"'
Then, with heaven's light on his face, 'Amen,
I come in the name of the Lord,' said Ben.
'Frozen to death,' the watchman said
When at last he found him in his bed,
With a smile on his face so strange and bright,
He wondered what old Ben saw that night.
Ben's lips were silent, and never told,
He had gone up higher to find his gold.

## THE OLD STAGE QUEEN.—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Back in the box, by the curtains shaded,
  She sits alone, by the house unseen;
Her eye is dim, her cheek is faded,
  She who was once the people's Queen.

The curtain rolls up, and she sees before her
  A vision of beauty and youth and grace.
Ah! no wonder all hearts adore her,
  Silver-throated and fair of face.

Out of her box she leans and listens;
  Oh! is it with pleasure or with despair
That her thin cheek pales and her dim eye glistens
  While that fresh young voice sings the grand old air?

She is back again in the Past's bright splendour—
  When life seemed worth living, and love a truth;
Ere Time had told her she must surrender
  Her double dower of fame and youth.

It is she herself who stands there singing
  To that sea of faces that shines and stirs;
And cheers on cheers that go up ringing
  And rousing the echoes—are hers—all hers!

Just for one moment the sweet delusion
  Quickens her pulses and blurs her sight,
And wakes within her that wild confusion
  Of joy that is anguish and fierce delight.

Then the curtain goes down and the lights are gleaming
  Brightly o'er circle and box and stall;
She starts like a sleeper who wakes from dreaming—
  Her past lies under a funeral pall.

Her day is dead and her star descended,
  Never to rise or shine again;
Her reign is over—her Queenship ended—
  A new name is sounded and sung by men.

All the glitter and glow and splendour,
  All the glory of that lost day,
With the friends that seemed true, and the love that seemed tender,
  Why, what is all but a dead bouquet?

She rises to go. Has the night turned colder?
  The new Queen answers to call and shout;
And the old Queen looks back over her shoulder,
  Then all unnoticed she passes out.

(From *Poems of Pleasure.*)

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## THE RESCUE: A TALE OF THE RHONDDA VALLEY.

HENRY BELLYSE BAILDON.

For my tale I ask no listeners
  Who in near or distant lands
To a coal-fire in the winter
  Have not held their hands.

Whoso has never watched the embers
  Crumble in its fiery core,
And the flame-tongues writhe and wrestle,
  Let them hear no more!

For I sing but of those who labour
  Deep in the dark of the earth,
Whose sorrow is paid for our pleasure,
  Their pain for our mirth;

Whose dreary toil in the darkness
  Wins light for other men,
Who quarry the hoarded sun-heat
  To make it Man's again.

But I sing a band of heroes,
  As noble as Homer had;
They sought no city's ruin,
  But they made a nation glad.

For one day in the Rhondda valley
  A sullen, low boom was heard,
And through the affrighted people
  The tidings went like a word.

For, alack! in cot and village
  Too well was the meaning known
Of the shock and the boom and the shudder
  Of the earth, with an inward groan!

And swifter than bird may travel,
  And faster than wind may drive,
Went the words through the breadth of Britain
  Of those miners buried alive.

'Far buried,' so ran the message,
  'In the ruined working,' it said;
'Small hope for help to reach them
  Till the strongest man be dead.'

. . . . .

Ten long, long days in the darkness,
  Four hundred feet from the day,
Cold, damp, and fearful, and starving,
  The imprisoned miners lay.

Ten days in that rayless dungeon,
By those waters voiceless and black,
While the tide of Death crept upward,
And the tide of Life ebbed back.

Ten weary days loving watchers
To that grim pit-mouth came,
Their fear, like a night, about them,
Their hope a flickering flame.

Ten days did the heart of a mother
Pray for the life of her son;
The wife pled for her husband,
The maiden wept for *one*.

Ten sad nights a miner's children
Went grave and tearful to bed;
For their mother paused for weeping
When their simple prayers she led.

Ten days through that Rhondda valley
One terror brooded in air,
On every lip one question,
In every heart one prayer.

Ten days with mind and muscle,
With engine, labour, and plan,
With the fateful forces of Nature
Was waged the warfare of Man.

. . . . .

One yard, one yard of barrier
Is left 'twixt life and death!
Oh! why does every toiler pause
And draw so deep a breath?

Alas! alas! in the darkness
The waters have risen breast-high.
They can hear the captives moaning,
'Take us out, take us out, or we die!'

But well, too well, to those gallant hearts
Is the nearing peril known:
Whoso would save his comrades' lives
Must dare to lose his own.

There was silence round that pit-mouth,
A silence as of prayer;
No sound but the labouring engine
That panted and struggled there.

Then was asked the final question,
'Are there any, ere too late,
To dare the perilous rescue?'
In answer there stood eight.

Eight heroes, with lamp and mandril,
And faces nobly stern,
Descend the long, dark shaft again.
O God! will they return?

Hour by hour round that pit-mouth
The haggard watchers must wait;
They can but pray for the captives,
And for that noble Eight.

. . . . .

At last, at last, a message!
And hundreds strain to hear:
'They are saved! All saved!' In joyful awe
Is hushed the rising cheer.

There are tears on manly faces,
The women weep anew,
Not the bitter rain of sorrow,
But happy, calm tears, like dew.

In a rapturous Thanksgiving
Each spirit chanteth a part;
*God hushes His angel-choirs to hear*
*That Hymn of the Human Heart!*

Now their task is consummated,
The utmost danger is braved;
Together to the daylight rise
The savers and the saved!

Go search your country's annals,
And find me a braver band
Than those eight men of the Rhondda,
Who fought death hand to hand!

No fervour of battle fired them,
No war-cry courage gave;
To that grim combat they went down
As calm as they were brave.

Such deeds make nations noble,
And bid us not forget,
Let gloomy seers rail as they will,
We have our heroes yet.

(From *The Rescue, and other Poems*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## THE 'PITCH-IN:' AN ENGINE-DRIVER'S STORY.

G. MANVILLE FENN.

How did I get this here mark on my cheek,
And the long black scar on my brow?
Oh, never mind—it would take a week,
And you can't want to know it now.
You do! Very well, you shall have it, then,
All the same a bit rough in the style;
For you can't expect stories from company men,
Nor poems from sons of the syle.

You know as I drives the 'Hector,' eh?
Express on the North great gauge;

I only drove one of the shorts that day,
And of course was much lower in wage.
We stopped at all stations from London out,
And we stopped at each signal in;
The work made you thin, sir, no matter how stout,
But it never made stout the man thin.

For you see on that line there were tunnels a score,
And cross-lines, all forming a net;
And points in one tunnel where Jack Braddon swore
We should some day be 'in for it' yet.
Old Jack was my stoker—a 'pitch-in' he meant;
But he 'd stoked for so many a year
That his mind had got sooty, his back warp'd and bent,
And his eyes had a fiery leer.

He was good mate and true, though, to me in those days,
And many 's the mile we have run.
Poor Jack! he was out-and-out queer in his ways—
But there, I shall never be done.
There was down in the tunnel, and always had been,
Beside of the switches, a hole,
With a lamp for the signals—a red and a green,
You know—on the top of a pole.

And here, like a sentry, a signalman stayed,
A-checking each train that should run;
Ups and downs as they come—there, it made *me* afraid
To think what a slip would have done.
For, you see, while one up on the rail came full dash,
Were the red lamp of danger not shown,
A down might run on, cross the metals, and—crash!
How the line would with murder be strown!

And this in a tunnel with darkness and death—
This smash in a place black as ink;
Good God! just to think—there to give up your breath!
I tell you, I shuddered to think.

And many 's the time I have pulled a deep sigh
As we rattled along past the box,
After seeing the signalman right, going by,
At his post, where the drivers he blocks.

There came, though, a day when—I don't know how 'twere—
Jack Braddon was down in the dumps;
And I caught him a-looking at me with a stare,
As he stooped just to throw in the lumps.
'What 's up, Jack?' I says as we ran along trim.
'You 'd look 'most as green as a leek
If that phisog of yours as Wallsend waren't grim;
But there, man, look! screw down the brake.'

Jack screwed down like mad as we come to a stop;
And then, as we run on once more,
Jack says to me soft, as he let his voice drop,
'Dick Dallas, who 's on at the shore?'
We called that the 'shore,' there—the tunnel, I mean,
Where the line crossed the up, by the hole;
For it looked bad as any foul sewer I 've seen,
And black as our tender of coal.

'Who 's on at the shore, Jack?' I says. 'Why, what odds?
There 's steady chaps 'pointed, a heap.'
'Right, Dick, then,' says Jack; 'and our lives they are God's—
*But suppose as that chap was asleep!*'
We were running along at a pretty good pace,
With the mouth of the tunnel ahead,
When Jack spoke; and then if the cutting—each place—
Didn't spin round as if I 'd been bled.

'Confound you!' I says in a voice full of spite,
As I whistled and put on more steam;
For there in the distance the green shone 'all right,'
Though it seemed quite a sickening gleam.
'Here, shove on more coal,' I says, 'quick, and don't talk;
Wait till out of this tunnel we get.

You 're the worst sorter mate,' I says, 'by a long chalk—
Not that I at your funking shall fret.'

I hardly had roared out them words to poor Jack,
When we dashed by the box with a leap;
And there, in a moment, I saw, leaning back,
The signalman—*helpless!—asleep!*
The next flash ahead showed an engine's two lamps—
My God! I can't tell you my fears.
'Turn steam off!—turn on!' Why, look here, my face damps
As I tell you the tale after years.

'Screw down!—curse you, screw!' Jack had done it before;
But what was the use of the brake?
The points they were clanking out loud, as I swore,
And the tunnel was filled by a shriek,
As the up engine's whistle rang out long and shrill,
And then—can't you picture it well?—
Two trains in a tunnel!—a crash!—then all still;
And after each agonised yell!

The cries of the frightened more loud than the crushed;
And then the loud hiss of the steam,
As from out of the bruised pipes it viciously rushed;
And the wreck in the lamps' sickly gleam.
It 's to me like a dream where I giddily rise
From the midst of a great heap of coal;
My face and hands bleeding, a mist in my eyes,
As I grope my way out from the hole.

Then I know: I went back with each porter and guard,
With the passengers trembling each man,
And struggled to drag out the injured all barred
By each splintered-up carriage and van:
Not any too soon, for before we had done
The furnaces fired the heap;
And racing and licking the walls as they run,
The flames roared and rushed with a leap.

I remember, too, now, all the wounded and dead—
A score at the least, when all told—
As they lay in the station; and then the guard said,
'Where 's Braddon?' and how I turned cold.
For it struck me at once in the shore he must lie,
With the flames roaring hard at his side;
And of all who were present not one dared to try
To again tread that furnace-hole wide.

I thought of Jack's young uns, I thought of his wife;
And then, with a 'God help me!' ran
Down the great ruddy tunnel, all scared for my life,
And climbed on, each tender to scan.
It was raging, that heat—it was scorching my skin,
And, half-beaten, I felt I must fail,
When from under an axle that wedged him tight in,
I heard my poor mate's helpless wail.

He called me by name. Then, through smoke and through steam,
With the heat even singeing my head,
I managed to free him; and out, by the gleam
Of the fire, I bore him—but dead!
For, before I had stumbled past sleeper and rail
One-half of the distance, he sighed—
'Oh! God help my little ones!' Then, with a wail—
'Oh Polly!' he sobbed out, and died.

You asked me about this old mark here—this seam,
And the scar of the burn on my brow;
It was all in that 'pitch-in,' that seems like a dream:
A signalman sleeping—that 's how.

(By kind permission of the author.)

## THE CROWN OF FAILURE.

A. St J. Adcock.

When you have lived your life,
When you have fought your last good fight and won,
And the day's work is finished, and the sun
Sets on the darkening world and all its strife—
Ere the worn hands are tired with all they 've done,
Ere the mind's strength begins to droop and wane,
Ere the first touch of sleep has dulled the brain,
Ere the heart's springs are slow and running dry—
When you have lived your life,
'Twere good to die.

If it may not be so,
If you but fight a fight you may not win—
See the far goal but may not enter in—
'Twere better then to die and not to know
Defeat—to die amidst the rush and din,
Still striving, while the heart beats high and fast
With glorious life: if you must fail, at last,
Such end were best, with all your hope and all
Your spirit in its youth,
Then, when you fall.

Far better so to die,
Still toiling upward through the mists obscure,
With all things possible and nothing sure,
Than to be touched by glory and passed by,
To win, by chance, fame that may not endure,
That dies and leaves you living, while you strive
With wasted breath to keep its flame alive,
And fan, with empty boasts and proud regrets,
Remembrance of a past
The world forgets.

# PROSE PIECES:

## SERIOUS AND PATHETIC.

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### A TRAGI-COMEDY OF CREEDS.—I. ZANGWILL.

Not much before midnight, in a Midland town—a thriving commercial town, whose dingy black streets swarmed with poverty and piety—a man in a soft felt hat and a white tie was hurrying home over a bridge that spanned a dark, crowded river. He had missed the tram, and did not care to be seen out late, but he could not afford a cab. Suddenly he felt a tug at his long black coat-tail. Vaguely alarmed and definitely annoyed, he turned round quickly. A breathless, roughly-clad, rugged-featured man loosed his hold of the skirt.

''Scuse me, sir—I 've been running,' gasped the stranger, placing his horny hand on his breast and panting.

'What is it? What do you want?' said the gentleman impatiently.

'My wife 's dying,' jerked the man.

'I 'm very sorry,' murmured the gentleman incredulously, expecting some conventional street-plea.

'Awful sudden attack—this last of hers—only came on an hour ago.'

'I 'm not a doctor.'

'No, sir; I know. I don't want a doctor. He 's there, and only gives her ten minutes to live. Come with me at once, please.'

'Come with you? Why, what good can I do?'

'You are a clergyman?'

'A clergyman!' repeated the other.

'Yes—aren't you?'

The wearer of the white tie looked embarrassed.

'Ye-es,' he stammered. 'In a—in a way. But I'm not the sort of clergyman your wife will be wanting.'

'No?' said the man, puzzled and pained. Then, with a sudden dread in his voice: 'You're not a Catholic clergyman?'

'No,' was the unhesitating reply.

'Oh, then it's all right!' cried the man, relieved. 'Come with me, sir, for God's sake! Don't let us waste time.' His face was lit up with anxious appeal.

But still the clergyman hesitated.

'You're making a mistake,' he murmured. 'I am not a Christian clergyman.' He turned to resume his walk.

'Not a Christian clergyman!' exclaimed the man, as who should say, 'Not a black negro!'

'No. I am a Jewish minister.'

'That don't matter,' broke in the man, almost before he could finish the sentence, 'as long as you're not a Catholic. Oh, don't go away now, sir!' His voice broke piteously. 'Don't go away after I've been chasing you for five minutes. I saw your rig out—I beg pardon, your coat and hat—in the distance, just-as I came out of the house. Walk back with me, anyhow,' he pleaded, seeing the Jew's hesitation. 'Oh! for pity's sake walk back with me at once, and we can discuss it as we go along. I know I should never get hold of another parson in time at this hour of the night.'

The man's accent was so poignant, his anxiety was so apparently sincere, that the minister's humility could scarcely resist the solicitation to walk back at least. He would still have time to decide whether to enter the house or not—whether the case was genuine, or a mere trap concealing robbery or worse. The man took a short cut through evil-looking slums that did not increase the minister's confidence. He wondered what his flock would think if they saw their pastor in such company. He was a young, unmarried minister, and the re-

putation of such in provincial Jewish congregations, overflowing with religion and tittle-tattle, is as a pretty unprotected orphan girl's.

'Why don't you go to your own clergyman?' he asked.

'I've got none,' said the man, half apologetically. 'I don't believe in nothing myself. But you know what women are!'

The minister sniffed, but did not deny the weakness of the sex.

'Betsy goes to some place or other every Sunday almost; sometimes she's there and back from a service before I'm up, and so long as the breakfast's ready I don't mind. I don't ask her no questions, and in return she don't bother about my soul—leastways, not for these ten years, ever since she's had kids to convert. We get along all right, the missus and me and the kids. Oh! but it's all to come to an end now,' he concluded, with a sob.

'Yes, but, my good fellow,' protested the minister, 'I told you you were making a mistake. You know nothing about religion; but what your wife wants is some one to talk to her of Jesus, or to give her the sacrament, or the confession, or something, for I confess I'm not very clear about the forms of Christianity; and I haven't got any wafers or things of that sort. No, I couldn't do it, even if I had a mind to. It would ruin my position if it were known. But, apart from that, I really can't do it. I wouldn't know what to say, and I couldn't bring my tongue to say it if I did.'

'Oh, but you believe in *something?*' persisted the man piteously.

'H'm! Yes, I can't deny that,' said the minister; 'but it's not the same something that your wife believes in.'

'You believe in a God, don't you?'

The minister felt a bit chagrined at being catechised in the elements of religion.

'Of course,' he said fretfully.

'There! I knew it,' cried the man in triumph. 'None of us do in our shop; but, of course, clergymen are different. But if you believe in a God, that's enough, ain't it? You're both religious folk.'

'No, it isn't enough—at least, not for your wife.'

'Oh, well, you needn't let out, sir, need you? So long as you talk of God and keep clear of the Pope. I've heard her going on about a scarlet woman to the kids. (God bless their little hearts! I wonder what they'll do without her!) She'll never know, sir, and she'll die happy. I've done my duty. She whispered I wasn't to bring a Roman Catholic, poor thing. I fancy I heard her say once they're even worse than Jews. Oh, I don't mean that, sir! You're sure you're not a Roman Catholic?' he concluded anxiously.

'Quite sure.'

'Well, sir, you'll keep the rest dark, won't you? There's no call to let out you don't believe the same other things as her.'

'I shall tell no lie,' said the minister firmly. 'You have called me to give consolation to your dying wife, and I shall do my duty as best I can. Is this the house?'

'Yes, sir—right at the top.'

The minister conquered a last impulse of mistrust, and looked round cautiously to be sure he was unobserved. Charity was not a strong point with his flock, and certainly his proceedings were suspicious. Even if they learned the truth, he was not at all sure they would not consider his praying with a dying Christian akin to blasphemy. On the whole, he must be credited with some courage in mounting that black, ill-smelling, interminable staircase. He found himself in a gloomy garret at last, lighted by an oil-lamp. A haggard woman lay with shut eyes on an iron bed, her chilling hands clasping the hands of the 'converted' kids, a boy of ten and a girl of seven, who stood weeping in their night attire. The doctor leaned against the head of the bed, the ungainly shadows of the group sprawling across the blank wall. He had done all he could, without hope of payment, to ease the poor woman's last moments. He was a big-brained, large-hearted Irishman, a Roman Catholic who thought science and religion might be the best of friends. The husband looked at him in frantic interrogation.

'You are not too late,' replied the doctor.

'Thank God!' said the atheist. 'Betsy, old girl, here is a clergyman.'

The cloud seemed to pass off the blind face, and a wave of wan sunlight to traverse it; slowly the eyes opened, the hands withdrew themselves from the children's grasp, and the palms met for prayer.

'Christ Jesus,' began the lips mechanically.

The minister was hot with confusion and a-quiver with emotion. He knew not what to say, as automatically he drew out a Hebrew prayer-book from his pocket, and began reading the Death-bed Confession in the English version that appeared on the alternate pages.

'I acknowledge unto Thee, O Lord, my God, and the God of my fathers, that both my cure and my death are in Thy hands . . . .' As he read, the dying lips moved, mumbling the words after him. How often had those white lips prayed that the stiff-necked Jews might find grace and be saved from damnation; how often had those poor, rough hands put pennies into conversionist collecting-boxes, after toiling hard to scrape them together, so that only *she* might suffer by their diversion from the household treasury!

The prayer went on, the mournful monotone thrilling through the hot, dim, oil-reeking attic, and awing the weeping children into silence. The atheist stood by reverently, torn by conflicting emotions; glad the poor foolish creature had her wish, and on thorns lest she should live long enough to discover the deception. There was no room in his overcharged heart for personal grief just then. 'Make known to me the path of life; in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.' An ecstatic look overspread the plain, care-worn face; she stretched out her arms as if to embrace some unseen vision.

'Yes, I am coming—Jesus,' she murmured. Then her hands dropped heavily upon her breast, the face grew rigid, the eyes closed. Involuntarily the minister seized the hand nearest him. He felt it respond faintly to his clasp in unconsciousness of the pagan pollution of his touch. He read on: 'Thou art the Father of the fatherless and the Judge of the widow; protect my beloved kindred, with whose soul my own is knit.'

The lips still echoed him almost imperceptibly, the departing

spirit lulled into peace by the prayer of an unbeliever. 'Into Thy hand I commend my spirit. Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. Amen and Amen.'

And in that last Amen, with a final gleam of blessedness flitting across her sightless face, the poor Christian toiler breathed out her life of pain, holding the Jew's hand. There was a moment of solemn silence, the three men becoming as the little children in the presence of the eternal mystery.

. . . . . .

It leaked out, as everything did in that gossipy town and among that gossipy Jewish congregation. To the minister's relief, his flock took it better than he expected.

'What a blessed privilege for that heathen female!' was all their comment.'

(By kind permission of the author.)

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## DAPHNE.—GUY BOOTHBY.

(*Abridged for Recitation.*)

Tall, angular, and peculiarly plain, she was the wife of a Queensland Bush carrier; and, in spite of the glaring incongruity of it, it must be recorded that her baptismal name was Daphne. Her husband was a carrier on the Hidgeree-Kalaba track, and she was at once the brain and mainstay of his business.

My first acquaintance with them occurred on the edge of a Boree scrub, a dismal place, and more than a hundred miles removed from either of the above townships. They were camped beside a big water-hole, and on dismounting from my horse I was introduced by the carrier, with becoming ceremony, to his wife. Great were the proofs of friendship they showed to me, and long will I cherish the memory of that rough but hearty hospitality. Next morning I went my way, they theirs, and it was not for nearly a year that we met again.

When next I heard of them Daphne was in the township hospital, recovering from a serious accident occasioned by a fall

from the wagon; and her husband—an enormously-built man, with a rough manner, which, by those unskilled in such matters, might easily have been mistaken for insolence—had that very day returned with loading from the west. By inquiring after his wife, whose illness I was aware of, I touched the right string; for his eyes lit up, his voice softened, and he answered my questions with surprising meekness.

'She was getting on well,' he said; 'but, all the same, it was terrible slow work.'

Now, it must be known here that although the Kalaba hospital occupies the best position in that township, even then it is, if anything, a little less cheerful than an undertaker's showroom. Great gray plains surround it on three sides; the township, with its ugly whitewashed roofs, stares at it from the fourth; and it would be impossible to say which view would be likely to have the most depressing effect upon an invalid.

When my business was finished I rode up to the hospital and left some newspapers. Daphne being the only patient, I found her occupying the best bed in the only ward. Her wiry black hair straggled in rank confusion about the pillow, while her complexion harmonised, as near as a well-tanned skin would permit, with the dingy whiteness of the counterpane. Only the great, dark, honest eyes lent relief to the monotony of her expression, and they were now full of something which, when read aright, spelt hopelessness of an extraordinary degree.

Towards the end of the afternoon the husband made his appearance, and, preceded by the matron, stalked into his wife's presence. For a moment he stood in the doorway, dazed, bewildered perhaps by the half-darkness; then, recognising his wife, he advanced towards the bed.

'Daphne, old gal,' he said, with a little tremor in his voice as he bent over her, 'an' 'ow 's it with 'ee now? Ye looks better by a darned sight!'

She gave a little sigh before she replied:

'I 'm nearly well now, Bill; better 'n I 'ave been by a long chalk. Sit ye down, old man, an' tell us 'ow it goes with the children an' the team!'

Bill sat very gingerly on the edge of the bed, and, as if out

of compliment to the peculiar cleanliness of the place, fell to scrubbing his face with a flaring red cotton handkerchief.

'The kids is fit, an' the team 's first-class,' he answered.

Then, with a gesture of almost awe, he assumed possession of one of the thin brown hands upon the coverlet.

'My lass, 'ow dog poor yer 'ands has got, to be sure; but they was always pretty 'ands to my thinkin'.'

Daphne patted his great brown paws, and allowed a little wan smile of gratified vanity to flicker across her face. Let the woman be ever so old and plain, she is never beyond the reach of a compliment from the man she loves.

'An' 'ow 's the roads lookin' out back?' she asked.

'Ai, an' no mistake; green as a leaf all the way. From here to Kidgeree Creek there 's water in every hole, an' the little wild-flowers yer used to like is that thick along the track yer can hardly see the grass for 'em. I brought yer some.'

Out of the lining of his big cabbage-tree hat he took a tiny bunch of Bush blue-bells and placed them in her hand. It was a critical moment for both of them. He was acutely afraid of ridicule; she, for some reason she could not have explained, did not know whether to laugh or cry.

She laid the flowers on the table by her bedside, and then turned to her husband, the better to express her thanks.

'Bill,' she said softly, 'you was allus a good chap to me.'

'Nay, nay, my lass, you mustn't say that. You don't know 'ow we misses yer out yonder; things ain't the same at all without you. Make 'aste an' get well an' come back to the kids an' me, an' let 's get out of this 'ere town.'

'Bill! I shan't be'——

'Shan't be what, lass?'

He looked rather anxiously down at her.

'I shan't be'—— The weak voice paused as if to think of a word, then she seemed to choke, and after that a painful silence ensued. Finally she said, 'I—I shan't be long.'

Bill gave a sigh of relief and continued: 'I 'm 'avin' new tires put on the fore-wheels, an' we 've got the new pair o' steers in place o' Billabong an' Blossom, that were too old for work. We 've got full loadin' out to the Diamantina an' back, an' when

the trip 's done there 'll perhaps be a matter of twenty pounds to put into the stocking for the kids. Get well, my lass, an' come back to yer place on the load; the Bush wind, an' the blue sky, an' the sight o' them wild-flowers 'll soon set yer right. Yer ain't feelin' any worse, are yer?'

'No, old man; the doctor says I 'll be out again this side o' Sunday.'

'That 's the talk! We 're camped down yonder on the creek, an' the day ye 're out I 'll come up an' fetch yer meself. The team 'll be all fresh, the loadin' 'll be aboard, an' the very next mornin' we 'll have the yokes on, an' be where a man 's got room to breathe!'

'Why, Bill, I never 'eard yer talk so before! It 's like what the parson, who comes here every Monday, calls poetry.'

There was an ocean of pathos in the man's reply:

'Yer see, old girl, I must talk a bit different, for yer ain't never been ill like this afore!'

Another long silence fell upon the pair. Then he rose to say good-bye, and his wife's face grew, if possible, paler than before.

'Bill!' she began falteringly, 'I 've been a-tryin' all the time yer 've been here to tell yer somethin', but I dunno 'ow to begin. It 's this way'——

'Out wi' it, my lass. What 's wrong? Ain't they been a-treatin' yer well in 'orsepital?'

'It 's not that, Bill,' she answered. 'But there, I can't tell you. Flesh and blood couldn't, let alone yer wife. You must just ask the doctor, when yer get outside, if 'e 's got anythin' to say agin' me walkin' with the team, will yer?'

'If yer says so, in course. But, Daphne, there ain't nothin' agin' it, is there?'

'You ax 'im; 'e 'll tell yer, Bill. But 'ere 's the matron coming; I guess yer 'd better be goin'. Tell them kiddies their mother ain't forgot 'em.'

Raising herself with an effort, she pulled the big man's tangled head down to her, and kissed him on the forehead with a gentleness that would have been grotesque if the sentiment that prompted it had not been so gruesomely pathetic. Then, as

the matron approached the bed, he went down the corridor to find the house-surgeon.

The latter, I may tell you, was a rough man, embittered by hard work and insufficient returns, the position of house-surgeon in a Bush hospital being but little sought after by the shining lights of the profession.

When Daphne's husband entered he was engaged writing to the Board, demanding, for the sixth time, an increase in his meagre salary.

He looked up, and, seeing the man before him, said roughly: 'Well! what do you want?'

The carrier shuffled from one foot to the other with evident uneasiness.

'Beg yer pardin, sir, an' sorry for interruptin'; but the missus axed me to ax you as if it were likely yer 'd have any objection to 'er walkin' alongside the team when she comes out?'

'Whose missis? Oh! I understand: the woman in the ward there. Walk beside the team? Good heavens, man! What are you talking about? Are you mad? How on earth can she walk beside the team?'

'I mean, in course, sir, when she 's well enough to come out.'

'Well enough to come out? Why, man alive! she 's as well now as ever she will be. It was compound fracture of both femur, and a double amputation. *She hasn't a leg to stand on, much less to walk with!* No, no! You 'd better look out for a house in the township, and find somebody to move her about for the rest of her life. She 'll never be able to travel with you again. Here, hang it, man, go outside if you 're going to be ill!'

'I ax yer pardin, sir, but—if yer don't mind, I 'll just sit down for a minute. Everything 's—a-goin' round an' round, an' I don't somehow feel kinder well.'

## THE SABOTS OF LITTLE WOLFF.—François Coppée.

Translated by Albert Stetner.

Once upon a time—it was so long ago that the whole world has forgotten the date—in a city in the north of Europe—whose name is so difficult to pronounce that nobody remembers it—once upon a time there was a little boy of seven, named Wolff, an orphan, in charge of an old aunt, who was hard and avaricious, who only embraced him on New Year's Day, and who breathed a sigh of regret every time that she gave him a porringer of soup.

But the poor little chap was naturally so good that he loved the old woman just the same, although she frightened him very much, and he could never see without trembling the great wart, ornamented with four gray hairs, which she had on the end of her nose.

As the aunt of Wolff was known through all the village to have a house and an old stocking full of gold, she did not dare to send her nephew to the school for the poor. But she so schemed to obtain a reduction of the price with the schoolmaster whose school little Wolff attended, that the bad teacher, vexed at having a scholar so badly dressed and who paid so poorly, punished him very often and unjustly with the backboard and fool's cap, and even stirred his fellow-pupils against him, all sons of well-to-do men, who made the orphan their scapegoat.

The poor little fellow was therefore as miserable as the stones in the street, and hid himself in out-of-the-way corners to cry; when Christmas came.

The night before Christmas the schoolmaster was to take all of his pupils to the midnight mass, and bring them back to their homes.

Now, as the winter was very severe that year, and as for several days a great quantity of snow had fallen, the scholars came to the rendezvous warmly wrapped and bundled up, with fur caps pulled down over their ears, double and triple jackets, knitted gloves and mittens, and good, thick-nailed boots, with strong soles. Only little Wolff came shivering in the clothes that he wore week-days and Sundays, and with nothing on his feet but coarse Strasbourg socks and heavy sabots, or wooden shoes.

His thoughtless comrades made a thousand jests over his sad

looks and his peasant's dress. But the orphan was so occupied in blowing on his fingers, and suffered so much from his chilblains, that he took no notice of them; and the troop of boys, with the master at their head, started for the church.

It was fine in the church, which was resplendent with wax-candles; and the scholars, excited by the pleasant warmth, profited by the noise of the organ and the singing to talk to each other in a low voice. They boasted of the fine suppers that were waiting for them at home. The son of the burgomaster had seen, before he went out, a monstrous goose that the truffles marked with black spots like a leopard. At the house of the first citizen there was a little fir-tree in a wooden box, from whose branches hung oranges, sweetmeats, and toys. And the cook of the first citizen had pinned behind her back the two strings of her cap, as she only did on her days of inspiration when she was sure of succeeding with her famous sugar-candy. And then the scholars spoke, too, of what the Christ-child would bring to them, of what He would put in their shoes, which they would, of course, be very careful to leave in the chimney before going to bed. And the eyes of those little chaps, lively as a parcel of mice, sparkled in advance with the joy of seeing in their imagination pink paper bags of burnt almonds, lead soldiers drawn up in battalions in their boxes, menageries smelling of varnished wood, and magnificent jumping-jacks covered with purple and bells.

Little Wolff knew very well by experience that his old miserly aunt would send him supperless to bed. But in the simplicity of his soul, and knowing that he had been all the year as good and industrious as possible, he hoped that the Christ-child would not forget him, and he, too, looked eagerly forward by and by to putting his wooden shoes in the ashes of the fireplace.

The midnight mass concluded, the faithful went away, anxious for supper, and the band of scholars, walking two by two after their teacher, left the church.

Now, under the porch, sitting on a stone seat under a Gothic niche, a child was sleeping—a child covered by a robe of white linen, and whose feet were bare, notwithstanding the cold. He was not a beggar, for his robe was new and nice, and near him on the ground were seen, lying in a cloth, a square, a hatchet, a

pair of compasses, and the other tools of a carpenter's apprentice. Under the light of the stars, his face, with its closed eyes, bore an expression of divine sweetness, and his long locks of golden hair seemed like an aureole about his head. But the child's feet, blue in the cold of that December night, were sad to see.

The scholars, so well clothed and shod for the winter, passed heedlessly before the unknown child. One of them, even, the son of one of the principal men in the village, looked at the waif with an expression in which could be seen all the scorn of the rich for the poor, the well-fed for the hungry.

But little Wolff, coming the last out of the church, stopped, full of compassion, before the beautiful sleeping infant.

'Alas!' said the orphan to himself, 'it is too bad, this poor little one going barefoot in such bad weather. But what is worse than all, he has not to-night even a boot or a wooden shoe to leave before him while he sleeps, so that the Christ-child could put something there to comfort him in his misery.'

And, carried away by the goodness of his heart, little Wolff took off the wooden shoe from his right foot, and laid it in front of the sleeping child; and then, as best he could, limping along on his poor blistered foot and dragging his sock through the snow, he went back to his aunt's.

'Look at the worthless fellow!' cried his aunt, full of anger at his return without one of his shoes. 'What have you done with your wooden shoe, little wretch?'

Little Wolff did not know how to deceive, and although he was shaking with terror at seeing the gray hairs bristle up on the nose of the angry woman, he tried to stammer out some account of his adventure.

But the old woman burst into a frightful peal of laughter.

'Ah, monsieur takes off his shoes for beggars! Ah, monsieur gives away his wooden shoe to a barefoot! That is something new for example! Oh, well, since that is so, I am going to put the wooden shoe which you have left in the chimney, and I promise you the Christ-child will leave there to-night something to whip you with in the morning. And you shall pass the day to-morrow on dry bread and water. We will see if next time you give away your shoes to the first vagabond that comes.'

And the wicked woman, after having given the poor boy a couple of slaps, made him climb up to his bed in the attic. Grieved to the heart, the child went to bed in the dark, and soon went to sleep on his pillow steeped with tears.

But on the morrow morning, when the old woman, awakened by the cold and shaken by her cough, went downstairs—oh, wonderful sight!—she saw the great chimney full of beautiful playthings, and sacks of magnificent candies, and all sorts of good things; and before all these splendid things, the right shoe, that her nephew had given to the little waif, stood by the side of the left shoe, that she herself had put there that very night, and where she meant to put a birch rod.

And as little Wolff, running down to learn the meaning of his aunt's exclamation, stood in artless ecstasy before all these splendid Christmas presents, suddenly there were loud cries of laughter out-of-doors. The old woman and the little boy went out to know what it all meant, and saw all the neighbours gathered around the public fountain. What had happened? Oh, something very amusing and very extraordinary. The children of all the rich people of the village, those whose parents had wished to surprise them by the most beautiful gifts, had found only rods in their shoes.

Then the orphan and the old woman, thinking of all the beautiful things that were in their chimney, were full of amazement. But presently they saw the *curé* coming with wonder in his face. Above the seat placed near the door of the church, at the same place where, in the evening, a child, clad in a white robe, and with feet bare notwithstanding the cold, had rested His sleeping head, the priest had just seen a circle of gold incrusted with precious stones.

And they all crossed themselves devoutly, comprehending that the beautiful sleeping child, near whom were the carpenter's tools, was Jesus of Nazareth in person, become for an hour such as He was when He worked in His parents' house; and they bowed themselves before that miracle that the good God had seen fit to work, to reward the faith and charity of a child.

(From *Ten Tales by François Coppée*, by kind permission of Messrs Harper & Brothers.)

## THE BRIGHTEST GIFT.—ANON.

One day, when the studies were over, the schoolmaster took from his desk an odd-looking box with pictures of birds painted upon it. He called the boys to his desk and told them that he had bought each of them a little present. Then, while they stood around, he drew out of it some white and pink shells and some pretty toys, which he gave to them with kind and pleasant words.

But the most lovely thing of all was a little statue of an angel. She stood with her small, white hands folded over her breast, and her face uplifted, and appeared so fair and so pure that the children gazed at her with eyes full of joy. They had never seen anything like it.

'This angel is too lovely to be given to any child who is not good and true of heart. But the one who brings me to-morrow the brightest thing on earth shall have the angel for his own.'

The children looked at each other, not feeling sure that they understood the master. But he said no more, and they went home.

The next day, after the lessons were finished, the children gathered around the master to show him what they had brought. Some had picked up sparkling stones by the roadside; one had polished a small piece of silver until it shone like a mirror; another had brought a watch-crystal which his father had given him; and Henry, the merchant's son, had brought a breast-pin with a stone set in its centre that shone like a diamond.

'Ah! mine is the brightest!' cried Henry.

'But where is little Carl?' asked Master Lewis, looking around. 'We cannot decide until Carl brings his offering.'

At that moment little Carl, the baker's only son, came running into the room. In his hands, held up lovingly against his neck, was a snow-white dove. Some red drops upon its downy breast showed that it had been hurt.

'Oh, master!' cried Carl, 'I was looking for something bright, when I came upon this poor dove. Some cruel boys were throwing stones at it, and I caught it up and ran here. Oh, I am afraid it will die!'

Even as he spoke the dove closed its soft eyes; it nestled closer to Carl's neck, dropped its head, and died.

Carl sank upon his knees beside the master's desk, and from his eyes there fell upon the poor dove's broken wing two tears, large and bright.

The master took the dead bird from his hands and laid it tenderly upon his desk. Then turning to the schoolboys, he said, 'My children, there is no brighter thing on earth than a tender, pitying tear.'

'Give the white angel to little Carl!' cried the boys. 'We know now what you meant; and his offering is better than any of ours.'

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## THAT THERE DOG O' MINE.—Henry Lawson.

Macquarie the shearer had met with an accident. To tell the truth, he had been in a drunken row at a wayside shanty, from which he had escaped with three fractured ribs, a cracked head, and various minor abrasions. His dog, Tally, had been a sober but savage participator in the drunken row, and had escaped with a broken leg. Macquarie afterwards shouldered his swag and staggered and struggled along the track ten miles to the Union Town Hospital. Lord knows how he did it. He didn't exactly know himself. Tally limped behind all the way on three legs.

The doctors examined the man's injuries, and were surprised at his endurance. Even doctors are surprised sometimes—though they don't always show it. Of course they would take him in; but they objected to Tally. Dogs were not allowed on the premises.

'You will have to turn that dog out,' they said to the shearer as he sat on the edge of a bed.

Macquarie said nothing.

'We cannot allow dogs about the place, my man,' said the doctor in a louder tone, thinking the man was deaf.

'Tie him up in the yard, then.'

'No. He must go out. Dogs are not permitted on the grounds.'

Macquarie rose slowly to his feet, shut his agony behind his set teeth, painfully buttoned his shirt over his hairy chest, took up his waistcoat, and staggered to the corner where the swag lay.

'What are you going to do?' they asked.

'You ain't going to let my dog stop?'

'No. It's against the rules. There are no dogs allowed on the premises.'

He stooped and lifted his swag, but the pain was too great, and he leaned back against the wall.

'Come, come now! man alive!' exclaimed the doctor impatiently. 'You must be mad. You know you are not in a fit state to go out. Let the wardsman help you to undress.'

'No!' said Macquarie. 'No. If you won't take my dog in, you don't take me. He's got a broken leg, and wants fixing up just—just as much as—as I do. If I'm good enough to come in, he's good enough—and—and better.'

He paused a while, breathing painfully, and then went on:

'That—that there old dog o' mine has follered me, faithful and true, these twelve long, hard, and hungry years. He's about—about the only thing that ever cared whether I lived or fell and rotted on the cursed track.'

He rested again; then he continued: 'That—that there dog was pupped on the track,' he said, with a sad sort of smile. 'I carried him for months in a billy-can, and afterwards on my swag when he knocked up. . . . And the old slut—his mother—she'd foller along quite contented—and sniff the billy now and again—just to see if he was all right. . . . She follered me for God knows how many years. She follered me till she was blind—and for a year after. She follered me till she could crawl along through the dust no longer, and—and then I killed her, because I couldn't leave her behind alive!'

He rested again.

'And this here old dog,' he continued, touching Tally's upturned nose with his knotted fingers—'this here old dog has follered me for—for ten years; through floods and droughts, through fair times and—and hard—mostly hard; and kept me from going mad when I had no mate nor money on the lonely track; and watched over me for weeks when I was drunk—drugged and poisoned at

the cursed shanties; and saved my life more 'n once, and got kicks and curses very often for thanks; and forgave me for it all; and—and fought for me. He was the only living thing that stood up for me against that crawling push of curs when they set onter me at the shanty back yonder—and he left his mark on some of 'em, too; and—and so did I.'

He took another spell.

Then he drew in his breath, shut his teeth hard, shouldered his swag, stepped into the doorway, and faced round again.

The dog limped out of the corner and looked up anxiously.

'That there dog,' said Macquarie to the hospital staff in general, 'is a better dog than I 'm a man—or you too, it seems—and a better Christian. He 's been a better mate to me than I ever was to any man—or any man to me. He 's watched over me; kep' me from getting robbed many a time; fought for me; saved my life and took drunken kicks and curses for thanks—and forgave me. He 's been a true, straight, honest, and faithful mate to me—and I ain't going to desert him now. I ain't going to kick him out in the road with a broken leg. I—Oh, my God! my back!'

He groaned and lurched forward, but they caught him, slipped off the swag, and laid him on a bed.

Half-an-hour later the shearer was comfortably fixed up. 'Where 's my dog?' he asked when he came to himself.

'Oh, the dog 's all right,' said the nurse rather impatiently. 'Don't bother. The doctor 's setting his leg out in the yard.'

(From *While the Billy Boils*, by kind permission of Messrs Angus & Robertson, Sydney.)

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## A YOUNG HERO.—David Ker.

'Ay, ay, sir; they 're smart seamen enough, no doubt, them Dalmatians, and reason good, too, seein' they man half the Austrian navy; but they ain't got the seasonin' of an Englishman, put it how yer will!'

I am standing on the upper deck of the Austrian Lloyd steamer, looking my last upon pyramidal Jaffa, as it rises up in

terrace after terrace of stern gray masonry against the lustrous evening sky, with the foam-tipped breakers at its feet. Beside me, with his elbow on the handrail and his short pipe between his teeth, lounges the stalwart chief-engineer, as thorough an Englishman as if he had not spent two-thirds of his life abroad, and delighted to get hold of a listener who (as he phrases it) 'has been about a bit.'

'No; they ain't got an Englishman's seasonin',' he continues, pursuing his criticism of the Dalmatian seamen; 'and what's more, they ain't got an Englishman's *pluck* neither, not when it comes to a *real* scrape.'

'Can no one but an Englishman have any pluck, then?' ask I, laughing.

'Well, I won't just go for to say *that;* o' course a man as *is* a man 'ull have pluck in him all the world over. I've seed a Frencher tackle a shark to save his messmate; and I've seed a Rooshan stand to his gun arter every man in the battery, barrin' himself, had been blowed all to smash. But, if yer come to that, the pluckiest feller as ever *I* seed warn't a man at all!'

'What was he, then—a woman?'

'No, nor that neither; though, mark ye, I don't go for to say as how women ain't got pluck enough too—some on 'em at least. *My* old 'ooman, now, saved me once from a lubber of a Portigee as was just agoin' to stick a knife into me, when she cracked his nut with a handspike. (You can hear her spin the yarn yourself, if you likes to pay us a visit when we get to Constantinople.) But this un as I'm a-talkin' on was a little lad not much bigger 'n Tom Thumb, only with a sperrit of his own as 'ud ha' blowed up a man-o'-war a'most. Would yer like to hear about it?'

I eagerly assent; and the narrator, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, folds his brawny arms upon the top of the rail, and commences as follows:

''Bout three years ago, afore I got this berth as I'm in now, I was second-engineer aboard a Liverpool steamer bound for New York. There'd been a lot of extra cargo sent down just at the last minute, and we'd had no end of a job stowin' it away, and that run us late o' startin'; so that, altogether, as you may think, the cap'n warn't altogether in the sweetest temper in the

world, nor the mate neither. As for the chief-engineer, he was an easy-goin' sort o' chap, as nothin' on earth could put out. But on the mornin' of the third day out from Liverpool, he cum down to me in a precious hurry, lookin' as if *somethin'* had put him out pretty considerably.

'"Tom," says he, "what d'ye think? Blest if we ain't found a stowaway." (That's the name, you know, sir, as we gives to chaps as hides theirselves aboard outward-bound vessels, and gets carried out unbeknown to everybody.)

'"The dickens you have?" says I. "Who is he, and where did yer find him?"

'"Well, we found him stowed away among the casks for'ard; and ten to one we'd never ha' twigged him at all if the skipper's dog hadn't sniffed him out and begun barkin'. Sitch a little mite as he is, too! I could a'most put him in my baccy-pouch, poor little beggar! but he looks to be a good-plucked un for all that."

'I didn't wait to hear no more, but up on deck like a sky-rocket; and there I *did* see a sight, and no mistake. Every man-Jack o' the crew, and what few passengers we had aboard, was all in a ring on the fo'c'stle, and in the middle stood the fust-mate, lookin' as black as thunder. Right in front of him, lookin' a reg'lar mite among all them big fellers, was a little bit o' a lad not ten year old—ragged as a scarecrow, but with bright curly hair, and a bonny little face o' his own, if it hadn't been so woeful thin and pale. But, bless yer soul! to see the way that little chap held his head up and looked about him, you'd ha' thought the whole ship belonged to him. The mate was a great, hulkin' black-bearded feller, with a look that 'ud ha' frightened a horse, and a voice fit to make one jump through a keyhole; but the young un warn't a bit afeared—he stood straight up, and looked him full in the face with them bright, clear eyes o' hisn, for all the world as if he was Prince Halfred himself. Folk *did* say arterwards' (lowering his voice to a whisper) 'as how he comed o' better blood nor what he ought; and, for my part, I'm rayther o' that way o' thinkin' myself; for I never yet seed a common street-Harab (as they calls 'em now) carry it off like *him*. You might ha' heerd a pin drop as the mate spoke.

'"Well, you young whelp," says he in his grimmest voice, "what 's brought *you* here?"

'"It was my stepfather as done it," says the boy in a weak little voice, but as steady as could be. "Father 's dead, and mother 's married again, and my new father says as how he won't have no brats about eatin' up his wages; and he stowed me away when nobody warn't lookin', and guv me some grub to keep me goin' for a day or two till I got to sea. He says I 'm to go to Aunt Jane at Halifax; and here 's her address."

'And with that he slips his hand into the breast of his shirt, and out with a scrap o' paper, awful dirty and crumpled up, but with the address on it, right enough.

'*We* all believed every word on 't, even without the paper; for his look and his voice, and the way he spoke, was enough to show that there warn't a ha'porth o' lyin' in his whole skin. But the mate didn't seem to swaller the yarn at all; he only shrugged his shoulders with a kind o' grin, as much as to say, "I 'm too old a bird to be caught with *that* kind o' chaff;" and then he says to him, "Look here, my lad; that 's all very fine, but it won't do here—some of these men o' mine are in the secret, and I mean to have it out of 'em. Now, you just point out the man as stowed you away and fed you, this very minute; if you don't, it 'll be the worse for you!"

'The boy looked up in his bright, fearless way (it did my heart good to look at him, the brave little chap!), and says, quite quietly, "I 've told you the truth; I ain't got no more to say."

'The mate says nothin', but looks at him for a minute as if he 'd see clean through him; and then he faced round to the men, lookin' blacker than ever. "Reeve a rope to the yard!" he sings out loud enough to raise the dead. "Smart, now!"

'The men all looked at each other, as much as to say, "What on earth 's a-comin' now?" But aboard ship, o' course, when you 're told to do a thing you 've *got* to do it; so the rope was rove in a jiffy.

'"Now, my lad," says the mate in a hard, *square* kind o' voice, that made every word seem like fittin' a stone into a wall, "you see that 'ere rope? Well, I 'll give you ten minutes to confess" (he took out his watch and held it in his hand); "and if you

don't tell the truth afore the time's up I'll hang you like a dog!"

'The crew all stared at one another as if they couldn't believe their ears (I didn't believe mine, I can tell ye), and then a low growl went among 'em, like a wild beast a-wakin' out of a nap.

'"Silence there!" shouts the mate in a voice like the roar of a nor'-easter. "Stand by to run for'ard!" and with his own hands he put the noose round the boy's neck. The little feller never flinched a bit; but there were some among the sailors (big strong chaps as could ha' felled a ox) as shook like leaves in the wind. As for me, I bethought myself o' *my* little curly-haired lad at home, and how it 'ud be if any one was to go for to hang *him;* and at the very thought on 't I tingled all over, and my fingers clinched theirselves as if they was a-grippin' somebody's throat. I clutched hold o' a handspike, and held it behind my back, all ready.

'"Tom," whispers the chief-engineer to me, "d' ye think he really means to do it?"

'"I don't know," says I through my teeth; "but if he does, *he* shall go first, if I swings for it!"

'I've been in many an ugly scrape in my time, but I never felt 'arf as bad as I did then. Every minute seemed as long as a dozen; and the tick o' the mate's watch reg'lar pricked my ears like a pin. The men were very quiet, but there was a precious ugly look on some o' their faces; and I noticed that three or four on 'em kep' edgin' for'ard to where the mate was standin', in a way that meant mischief. As for me, I'd made up my mind that if he *did* go for to hang the poor little chap, I'd kill him on the spot, and take my chance.

'"Eight minutes!" says the mate, his great deep voice breakin' in upon the silence like the toll o' a funeral bell. "If you've got anything to confess, my lad, you'd best out with it, for yer time's nearly up."

'"I've told you the truth," answers the boy, very pale, but as firm as ever. "May I say my prayers, please?"

'The mate nodded; and down goes the poor little chap on his knees (with that infernal rope about his neck all the time),

and puts up his poor little hands to pray. I couldn't make out what he said (fact, my head was in sitch a whirl that I 'd hardly ha' knowed my own name); but I 'll be bound God heard it, every word. Then he ups on his feet again, and puts his hands behind him, and says to the mate, quite quietly, "I 'm ready!"

'And then, sir, the mate's hard, grim face broke up all at once, like I 've seed the ice in the Baltic. He snatched up the boy in his arms and kissed him, and bust out a-cryin' like a child; and I think there warn't one of us as didn't do the same. I know *I* did, for one.

'"God bless you, my boy!" says he, smoothin' the child's hair with his great hard hand. "You 're a true Englishman, every inch of you: you wouldn't tell a lie to save your life! Well, if so be as yer father 's cast ye off, *I* 'll be yer father from this day forth; and if I ever forget you, then may God forget me!"

'And he kep' his word, too. When we got to Halifax he found out the little un's aunt, and giv' her a lump o' money to make him comfortable; and now he goes to see the youngster every voyage, as reg'lar as can be; and to see the pair on 'em together—the little chap so fond o' him, and not bearin' him a bit o' grudge—it 's 'bout as pretty a sight as ever I seed. And now, sir, axin' yer parding, it 's time for me to be goin' below; so I 'll just wish yer good-night.'

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## THE BLACKSMITH OF RAGENBACH.—Anon.

One afternoon in early autumn, in the tavern room of Ragenbach, several men and women, assembled from the village, sat at their ease. The smith formed one of the merry company; he was a strong man, with resolute countenance and daring mien, but with such a good-natured smile on his lips that every one who saw him admired him. His arms were like bars of iron and his fist like a forge-hammer, so that few could equal him in strength of body.

The smith sat near the door chatting with one of his neighbours,

when all at once the door opened, and a dog came staggering into the room—a great, powerful beast, with a frightful aspect, his head hanging down, his eyes bloodshot, his lead-coloured tongue half-way out of his mouth, and his tail dropped between his legs. Thus the ferocious beast entered the room, out of which there was no escape but by one door. Scarcely had the smith's neighbour, who was bath-keeper of the place, seen the animal than he became deadly pale, sprang up, and exclaimed in a horrified voice, 'Good heavens! the dog is mad!'

Then arose a terrible outcry. The room was full of men and women, and the foaming beast stood before the only entrance—no one could leave without passing him. He snapped savagely right and left—no one could pass him without being bitten. This increased the fearful confusion. With horror depicted upon their countenances, all sprang up and shrunk from the dog. Who should deliver them from him? The smith also stood among them, and, as he saw the anguish of the people, it flashed across his mind how many of his happy and contented neighbours would be made miserable by a mad dog, and he formed a resolution, the like of which is scarcely to be found in the history of the human race, for noble self-devotion.

'Back all!' thundered he in a deep, strong voice. 'Let no one stir; for none can vanquish the beast but me! One victim must fall, in order to save the rest. I will be that victim; I will hold the brute, and while I do so make your escape.' The smith had scarcely spoken these words when the dog started towards the shrieking people. But he went not far. 'With God's help,' cried the smith, and he rushed upon the foaming beast, seized him with an iron grasp, and dashed him to the floor. A terrible struggle followed. The dog bit furiously on every side in a frightful manner. His long teeth tore the arms and thighs of the heroic smith, but he would not let him loose. Regardless alike of the excessive pain and the horrible death that must ensue, he held down with an iron grasp the snapping, howling brute, till all had escaped.

He then flung the half-strangled beast from him against the wall, and, dripping with blood and venomous foam, he left the room, locking the door after him. Some persons then shot the

dog through the windows. Weeping and lamenting, the people surrounded him who had saved their lives at the expense of his own. 'Be quiet; do not weep for me,' he said; 'one must die in order to save the others. Do not thank me—I have only performed my duty. When I am dead, think of me with love; and now pray for me, that God will not let me suffer long, nor too much. I will take care that no further mischief shall occur through me, for I must certainly become mad.'

He went straight to his workshop and selected a strong chain, the heaviest and firmest from his whole stock; then, with his own hands, welded it upon his limbs and around the anvil firmly. 'There,' said he, 'it is done,' after having silently and solemnly completed the work. 'Now you are secured, and I am inoffensive. So long as I live bring me my food. The rest I leave to God; into His hands I commend my spirit.'

Nothing could save the brave smith; neither tears, lamentations, nor prayers. Madness seized him, and after nine days he died. He died, but his memory will live from generation to generation, and will be venerated to the end of time. Search history through, and you will not find an action more glorious and sublime than the deed of this simple-minded man—the smith of Ragenbach.

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## THE REBEL SPY.—JAMES WORKMAN.

When the civil war broke out my brother Tom was living in New Orleans, and what should he do, the omadhaun, but go and join the Southern army; for Tom, though a good, honest lad, was never troubled with over-much common-sense. The man who goes out of his way to get a bullet or a bayonet through him is, to my way of thinking, little better than a fool. But if he must be after fighting, and nothing 'll keep him from it, why, let him fight on the right side; and it seemed to me that Tom was fighting on the wrong one.

Perhaps the truth is that I never had much taste for fighting, barring, of course, in a friendly and neighbour-like way with the weapons that Nature gave me, or it might be with a neat little

bit of blackthorn. That comes natural to any man; but it is not ashamed I am to confess that the sight of the cold steel always sent a shiver up the small of my back.

So you see that when the recruiting went on merrily, and the rest of the boys shouldered a rifle and went singing and drumming and marching away to leave their legs and arms, and often themselves, on a battlefield, I stayed at home and worked at my little farm. There was many a hard word thrown at me in those days, and the girls turned up their noses, and wouldn't look the way I was on.

'Ah, well,' thinks I, 'go your ways, my dears. It 's no quarrel of mine, and there 's a little cabin in County Clare where there would be little to eat, and maybe nothin' at all to pay the taxes and the rent, if Michael O'Flynn was to shoulder a rifle and get a bullet through his thick head in family quarrels that are no affair of his at all, at all.'

And perhaps there was just another little argument that made me indifferent to what the girls thought about me, and that was a bit of a liking I had for my cousin Norah, that had the charge of the dairy on the big farm next to mine. She was tall and slim, was Norah, with waving brown hair and dark-blue eyes, and a face as sweet as an angel's, and a voice like the music of a flute. I know she wasn't perfect. She 'd a temper of her own, had Norah, as every girl worth the whistle of a shillelagh has, and many a dressing down she 's given me; but the sweetness of her would make me feel as weak as a child, and I 'd rather have had a rough word from Norah than a kiss from the prettiest girl that ever stepped on the ground.

Well, I 'm a man with no manner of luck at all. It wasn't me she cared for—not she. It was Tom that was gold in her eyes, and she 'd have given the whole of my clumsy body for the end of his little finger. He was a fine boy, with a face like a picture, and a kind of melancholy look in his big brown eyes that made all the girls' hearts warm to him, while I—but that 's neither here nor there.

There was a pair of them, for Tom was that fond of Norah he 'd have cut his hand off to bring a smile to her face. It was to make a lady of her that he turned clerk and went to New

Orleans; and when the war broke out, the drums and the bugles, and the blandanderin' of the speechifiers, and so on, turned his Irish head, and he was shouldering and presenting arms, and marching and countermarching, before he knew where he was.

They 're queer, contradictory creatures, are women. There was another boy from a farm near by joined the South before Tom, and I was ashamed of the hard things Norah said about him, for at first she was all on the side of the North. But as soon as she heard that Tom was among the gray coats she swore by everything the South did or said ever afterwards; and if she hadn't been the prettiest girl for twenty miles round, she 'd have been tarred and feathered and ridden on a rail, for the Federals had been licked again and again, and were fairly dancing with rage.

For a long time the armies never came near us; but after a while they approached us bit by bit, and every morning I 'd look out with my heart in my mouth, expecting to see horse, foot, and artillery trampling through my illigant fields of wheat, and abstracting the ducks and hens, that were the pride of my heart, by way of a relish for breakfast. At last the only hand I had left joined the Federals, and I was left alone on the farm. And it was then the thing I 'm going to tell you about happened.

I was lying awake one night thinking about Tom and Norah, and wondering how I was to get in the harvest, when I heard a light tapping at the door. Up I jumps, all of a tremble, and laying hold of as fine a bit of timber as ever I held in my fist, I slips up the window and looks out. There was a big lump of a tramp standing at the door.

'What 'll you be after?' says I. 'This is no time to be takin' dacent folk out of their beds. Away wid you, or I 'll be lettin' the dog loose and givin' you a taste of the stick.'

Then the tramp begins laughin' all over him.

'Ah, go along with you,' says he. 'Is it yourself doesn't know your own mother's son?'

'Tom!' shouts I.

'Whisht, you omadhaun,' says he. 'The Yanks are all over the place, and if they lay their fingers on me without my

uniform on I 'll be shot as a spy. Open the door quick, and let me in.'

'Well,' says I when he was snug inside, 'it does my heart good to see you, Tom; but what's brought you here at the risk of your neck?'

'Oh,' says he, 'what would bring me here but Norah? I see her face in my dreams, Mike; I hear her voice in the wind; and see her and speak to her I must, for my heart's just sore for a sight of her. The General asked for volunteers to find out what the enemy was after, and I—knowing the neighbourhood—was chosen before all the rest. You must get me a sight of her, Mike, for I can't live without it.'

So it came about that at daybreak I went for Norah, and brought her across the fields; and we passed a company of Yankees lying among the wheat—sorrow take them!—and they made game of us, thinking we were sweethearts. Norah was as white as a sheet, and her eyes shining like stars, and my heart was as heavy as lead for the pure love of her, that cared no more for me than the grass she was walking on. I couldn't bear to see them meeting, and it was mighty superfluous I was feeling altogether; and so I went into the barn to look after the beasts, and left them alone in the kitchen.

Well, I hadn't been gone five minutes when I heard a scream and a scuffle, and I runs out. I thought I should have dropped, for there was a dozen soldiers standing at the door, and Tom, with his hands tied behind him, in the middle of them. They hadn't seen me, so I cut round to the back door, and found Norah in the kitchen more dead than alive. There was no time for talk.

'Norah, dear,' says I, 'there's a regiment of Southerners at Mackenzie's farm in the wood. If you love Tom you 'll run like the wind and bring them here as quick as the fine legs God gave you will carry you. I 'll thry to blandander these fellows till you come back; but remember every minute 's worth its weight in gold, and Tom's life hangs on a thread.'

The colour came into her cheeks and the light to her eyes, and she was off before I 'd got the words out of my mouth. I 'm thinking there 's a black spot in every man's heart. When I saw

her flying among the bushes and trees like a deer, why, God forgive me, I wished, just as long as it would take you to twirl a stick round your head, that I 'd stayed quiet and snug in the barn, and let the Yanks go on with Tom's funeral; for then, you see, I might have married Norah after all. I got over it; though, to tell the plain truth, the black notion kept trickling through my brain during most of the queer time that followed. Any way I shouldered a pitchfork, slipped round the barn, and came sauntering towards the soldiers as easy and cheerful as if I was going to inquire after their health.

'The top of the morning to you, boys,' says I. 'I suppose it 's thirsty you are. Have you come for a drink?'

There was a long, yellow-faced sergeant in charge of them, and he gave me a queer look out of the corner of his eye.

'When we happen to catch people harbouring spies,' says he, 'have you any notion what we do with them?'

'Shoot 'em, I hope,' says I. 'They deserve it.'

'We shoot the spies,' says he, keeping his eye on me; 'but the man that harbours them gets his house burnt down and his cattle driven off.'

'And why shouldn't he?' says I, as cool as a priest at a wedding, though my heart turned cold within me and my knees was all of a tremble.

Then he points at Tom, that was standing against the wall with his hands and legs tied.

'We 're going to shoot the spy,' says he, 'and then I reckon we 'll put a match to the place we found him in.'

I fairly laughed out, though, bedad! it was all I could do to keep from crying.

'Him a spy?' says I. 'Ah, sure you 're on the wrong track entirely. He 's a dacent boy from the old country that 's going to help me in with the harvest.'

And at that Tom spoke up, and he says, 'I am a spy,' says he, 'and proud of it; so your harvest 'll have to wait till the gray coats give the Yankees another whipping, when it 'll come in mighty convaynient for the cavalry.'

It seems they 'd found some papers on him, and he knew I 'd only ruin myself entirely by pretending to know him.

I saw his game, and I played up to him.

'You onprincipled blackguard,' says I. 'I 'd rather burn every field I have than a horse of them all should get a straw of it. Oh, captain jewel,' says I to the sergeant, 'sure you 'll not let the brigands come rampagin' around here. If their appetites is as powerful as what I 'm towld, sure it 's mysilf they 'll be 'atin' up, bones and all, let alone the pigs and the poultry.' I said it with such a face that the soldiers began laughing at me, and even the yellow-faced sergeant couldn't keep from grinning.

'I 'm not a captain,' says he. 'I 'm a sergeant.'

'More power to you, sergeant,' says I. 'You 've not been rewarded accordin' to your deserts. Shootin' spies is thirsty work,' says I. 'You 'd better have a drink before you commince operations.'

He 'd a cold heart in him, that sergeant; but I could see by the twinkle in his eye that I 'd touched a tender spot in it. They left a man to stand sentry over Tom, and they came trampling into the house after me. Once inside I fairly played with them, for they was just starving, and hadn't had a square meal for a week. I cooked them rashers of ham and made them hot coffee and cakes; and, bedad! it was like wolves and not like Christians they was eating, and the yellow-faced sergeant was the hungriest of them all.

And whenever I got a chance I 'd slip to the door and look along the track that ran through the wood and across the ford; but never a sound could I hear but the splashing of the falls higher up the river and the whistling of the birds in the trees. Back I 'd go smiling as sweet and gentle as if butter wouldn't melt in my mouth, though it was heart-breaking to see the fine ham and eggs fading away like snow in sunshine. And, oh! the way I humbugged them with jokes and stories, and fed them, and sang to them, and whistled to them, makes the perspiration pour off of me to this day; and all the time my heart was sick within me, and my ears straining for the tramp of marching feet, or the clickety-clack of the horses' hoofs along the road. And through it all I felt the corner of the sergeant's cold eye boring into me like a gimlet, and I knew he was after suspecting me,

and that in another minute I might be tied up alongside of Tom, and be trying to digest the cold lead instead of the fine ham and eggs the beasts was guzzling in my own little kitchen.

'Sorrow take you, Tom,' thinks I. 'Sure you might have paid a visit to your sweetheart without risking another man's skin.'

And when I thought of the little cabin in County Clare, and the poor old father and mother turned out on the bleak hillside for want of a trifle of rent, and of my own farm in a blaze, and of Norah dying an old maid, sure I hardly knew whether to cry or go out and give Tom the rough side of my tongue for all the foolishness he 'd been after.

The sergeant finished at last, and leaned back in his chair, picking his teeth with a fork.

'What 's your name?' says he.

'Michael O'Flynn, colonel,' says I, thinking a little promotion would soothe him.

'Well, Mr O'Flynn,' says he, with an evil grin on his yellow face, 'I 've got a pleasant surprise for you.'

'I 'm glad to hear it,' says I, though my heart sank into my boots.

'Come outside,' says he, and we all trooped out.

Tom was still standing with his back to the wall, with his chest out and his head up. There never was in all this world, I think, a braver man than Tom. I felt ashamed of myself when I saw him, for I felt as if a stream of iced water was beginning to trickle down my back, and my knees was shaking beneath me.

'Look at him,' says the sergeant, showing his teeth; 'look at him close, Mr O'Flynn.'

'I 'm lookin' at him,' says I.

'And you don't recognise him?' says he.

'Him?' says I.

'Yes,' says he. 'I 've been comparing your features, and I 've got an idea, Michael, that this fine young man is your long-lost brother, as the story-books say. Now, I reckon it would be playing it pretty low down on you to separate two loving brothers

that can't have seen each other for many a long year when one doesn't recognise the other.'

Then I saw he knew all, and the earth and the sky seemed to whirl round me, and I saw his yellow, grinning face through a kind of mist. Tom opened his mouth to speak, but at that very minute I heard above the splashing of the falls the click-clack of hoofs and the tinkling of steel. They weren't used to the sound of the water, and could hear nothing unusual. I looked at Tom with a wink, and he shut his mouth again. But the sergeant saw the wink too.

'Seize him,' shouts he.

There wasn't a minute to lose.

'What do you mean?' says I, picking up my stick from behind the door. 'What do you mean, you that's full to the lips with my illigant ham and eggs, by callin' me the brother of a spy, you yellow-faced monkey?'

Well, the soldiers made a rush at me, and I gave an hullo, and laid about me with my stick. I tell you I just played with them, for they'd thrown away their rifles to take me with the naked hands—me that could trail my coat through the fair at Killaloe and never a one durst step on it. Oh, bedad! it's a fine time I had of it, for it was just healthy diversion after the torments I'd been enduring inside of me. And Tom laughed and shouted:

'More power to your arm, Mike. Give it them! Whack! Hurroo!'

And it's the solemn truth, I laid half-a-dozen of them out before they got a hold of me. But no man can say that the Yankees haven't plenty of pluck in them, and in the end they closed on me.

'Look out, Mike,' shouts Tom; 'look out.'

I tried to swing round, but all of a sudden my head seemed split in two, and I fell like a log; for one of the ungrateful villains had picked up his rifle and given me a whack on the back of the head with the butt-end of it. But as I fell I heard the horses come thundering through the wood, and the yells of the rebels, and the shouts of the startled Yankees.

When I came to my senses Tom and Norah was bending

over me with their eyes shining with love and tenderness, and the rebels was slicing and frying the ham in the kitchen, and the Yanks was sitting in a row on the ground with their arms tied behind their backs like trussed fowls.

'Are you much hurt, Mike dear?' says Norah.

'No,' says I, sniffing the smell of the cooking, 'but it's ruined entirely I 'll be if I have the honour of entertainin' the military every day.'

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## THE REV. JOHN SMITH OF ARKLAND PREPARES HIS SERMON.—S. R. CROCKETT.

It is Friday, and the minister of Arkland was writing his sermon. Things had not gone well in Arkland that week. The meeting of the church court charged with the temporalities had not passed off well on Tuesday. One man especially had hurt the minister in a sensitive place. This was Peter M'Robert, the shoemaker. The minister had represented that a bath in a manse was not a luxury but a necessity, when Peter M'Robert said that, as for him, he had never 'had sic a thing in his life; an' as for the minister, that auld Maister Drouthy had dune withoot yin in the manse for thirty-three year to the satisfaction o' the pairish.'

Then there had been certain differences of opinion within the manse itself, and altogether the sermon had been begun with the intention of dressing down the offending parishioners. Nearly all sermons are personal to the preacher. They have been awakened within him by some circumstance which has come to his knowledge during the week. Preachers use this fact for good or evil according to their kind.

A plain man was John Smith of Arkland—as plain and hodden gray as his name. He had succeeded to the church with the largest majority that had been known in the presbytery, for in that neighbourhood to have given a man a unanimous call would have been considered a disgrace and a reflection on the critical discrimination of the congregation. He had tried to do his duty without fear or favour, only asking that his hands should not be tied. He visited the sick with a plain, quiet helpfulness which

brought sympathy with it as surely as the minister entered the house. His sermons were not brilliant, but they were staffs and crutches to many.

Now, as he sat at his manse window that bitter November morning, he watched the rain volleying on the round causeway-stones and the wide spaces of the village street dimly white with the dancing spray. The minister felt grimly in unison with the elements as he sat framing his opening sentences. He had chosen his text from a wonderful chapter: 'Wisdom is justified of her children.' And in this wise he began to write: 'To be ignorant is to be dangerous. The ignorant man, though he be but one, can make of no account the wisdom of many men. After the wise of many generations have been striving to teach a people wisdom, a knave or a fool may come and cry aloud, "There is no God but ourselves; there is no law but our own desires; there is no hereafter but the grave which we share with our sister the worm and our brother the dead dog!" Yet so great is the folly of man that such an one may draw away many people after him into the wilderness of sin and self-indulgence. It is in accordance with the nature of man that ignorance and narrowness should often succeed where wisdom is wholly rejected.'

'That will do,' said the minister, looking over his work. He had Peter M'Robert in his mind, and he rose and walked his study, 'mandating' his opening sentences with appropriate gestures, much to the astonishment of Marget Lowrie in the kitchen, who said, 'Save us! What 's wrang wi' the minister? This is no' Seturday!'

As he came in his sentry walks to the window which looked up the rain-swept street, he saw a dark-coloured, oblong patch with a strange protuberance on the right side, hirpling like a decrepit beetle athwart the road, till, being caught at the manse corner by a bitter swirl, this irregular shape—

If shape it could be called, that shape had none,

stumbled and fell within thirty yards of the study window, discharging on the muddy road an avalanche of shavings, small branches, knobs, angles, and squares of wood. In a moment the minister was out at the door and was helping old Nance

Kissock to her feet, and then under the eyes of all the wives in the village assisting her to collect again her bagful of chips and kindlings which the good-natured joiner allowed her to take once a week from his floor.

'I hope you are none the worse, Nance?' said the minister.

'I thank ye, Maister Smith; I 'm sair forfoughten wi' the wun', but gin the Almighty be willing, I 'll be at the kirk on Sabbath to hear ye. It 's guid to think on a' the week what ye tell us. Whiles it gars me forget the verra rheumatics!'

When the minister got back into the friendly shelter of his study he took up the sheet which he had laid down in order to rush out to Nance Kissock's assistance. He read it over, but when he took his pen again he did not seem to like it so well. If Nance were speaking the truth, and she fed during the week on the spiritual food which she received in his kirk on the Sabbath, he could not conceal from himself that next week she had a good chance of going hungry. Yet he could not allow Peter M'Robert to get off without a word, so he put the thought away from him and went on with his task. 'How often does a man of limited view mistake his own limitations for the possibilities of others! He never judges himself—he could not if he would—and naturally when he judges others it is only to condemn them.' A gust more than ordinarily powerful took the minister again to the window, and he saw John Scott, the herd from the Dornel, wringing the wet from his plaid. He knew that he had come down to the village from the hills three miles out of his road to get his wife's medicine. Presently he would trudge away manfully back again to the cot-house on the edge of the heather. Now, the minister knew that come storm or calm John Scott would be at the kirk on the next day but one, and that he would carry away in the cool, quiet brain that lay behind the broad brow the heads and particulars of the sermon he heard. As he went steadily knitting his stockings, conquering the heather with strides long and high, visiting his blackfaced flock, he would go revolving the message that his minister had given him in the House of God.

'Wisdom is justified of her children,' repeated the minister doggedly; but his text now awakened no fervour. There was no

enthusiasm in it. He thought that he would go out and let the November winds drive the rain into his face for a tonic. So he slipped on his Inverness and let himself out. His feet carried him towards the garret of one of his best friends, where an aged woman, blind and infirm, was spending the latter end of her days. She could not now come to church; therefore the minister went often to her—for it was sunshine to him also to bring light into that very dark place where the aged servant of God waited her end.

Mary Carment knew his step far down the stair, and she said to herself, 'It is himsel'!' and deep within her she gave thanks. 'It is a great thing to ha'e the bread o' life broken to us so simply that we a' understan' it, Maister Smith,' she said.

'But, Mary, how long is it since you heard a sermon of mine?'

'It 's true it 's a lang time since I heard ye preach, minister, but I hear o' yer sermons every Sabbath. Yin and anither tells me pairt o 't till I get as muckle as I can think on.'

As the minister said good-bye to Mary Carment, she said, 'Ye 'll ha'e ower muckle to think on to mind me on the Lord's Day when ye 're speaking for yer Maister; but I ha'e nane but you to mind, sir, so I 'll be prayin' for you a' the time that ye 're uphaudin' His name.'

'Thank you, Mary; I 'll not forget,' said her minister.

And he went out much strengthened.

As he went mansewards he passed the little cobbler's den where Peter M'Robert was tap-tapping all the day, and the sound of Peter's terrible cough called to him with a voice that claimed him. He stepped in, and after the word of salutation he asked his office-bearer:

'Are you not thinking of getting that cough attended to, Peter?'

'Wha—me? Na, no' me; hoots, it 's but a bit host—nocht to speak aboot; thank ye for speerin', Maister Smith.'

Just then the minister saw the doctor walking rapidly up the far side of the street, calm-faced and dignified, as if this howling November north-easter were a beautiful June morning. Him he summoned.

'Here 's Peter 'll no' speak to you about his cough. He must have some of your drugs, doctor.'

The doctor called the unwilling cobbler from his last, and after a brief examination he said:

'No, I don't think there will be any need for drugs, Mr Smith, if you, Peter, will use a gargle to get rid of a trifling local inflammation. Less lapstone-dust and less snuff, Peter, and warm water three times a day,' said the doctor succinctly, and proceeded on his rounds.

As the minister went out Peter looked up with a queer twinkle in his eye.

'Maister Smith,' he said, 'gin water be sae needful for the inside o' a cobbler's thrapple, maybe I was wrang in thinkin' that it wasna as necessary for the ootside o' a minister!'

'Then we'll say no more about it, Peter,' said the minister, smiling, as he closed the door. 'Mind your gargle!'

When the minister got to his study, he never stopped even to wipe his feet; and when the mistress followed to remonstrate, she found him putting his sermon in the fire.

The minister's text on the following Sabbath morning was an old one, but it was no old sermon that the Arkland folk got that day. The text was, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

Nance Kissock was there, and did not go home hungry; John Scott had come down from the muirs, and had something better than physic to take back to his ailing wife; Peter M'Robert sat in his corner looking cleaner than he had done within the memory of man—also he never coughed once; no less than eight different folk came in to tell blind Mary Carment about the sermon.

But none except the minister knew who it was that had been praying for him.

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## DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.—J. G. Holland.

I stand in a darkened room before a little casket that holds the silent form of my first-born. My arm is around the wife and mother, who weeps over the lost treasure, and cannot, till tears have had their way, be comforted. I had not thought that my

child could die—that *my* child could die. I knew that other children had died, but I felt safe. We laid the little fellow close by his grandfather at last; we strew his grave with flowers, and then return to our saddened home with hearts united in sorrow as they had never been united in joy, and with sympathies for ever opened toward all who are called to a kindred grief.

I wonder where he is to-day, in what mature angelhood he stands, how he will look when I meet him, how he will make himself known to me, who have been his teacher! He was like me: will his grandfather know him? I never can cease thinking of him as cared for and led by the same hand to which my own youthful fingers clung, and as hearing from the fond lips of my own father the story of his father's eventful life. I feel how wonderful to me has been the ministry of my children—how much more I have learned from them than they have ever learned from me—how by holding my own strong life in sweet subordination to their helplessness, they have taught me patience, self-sacrifice, self-control, truthfulness, faith, simplicity, and purity.

Ah! this taking to one's arms a little group of souls, fresh from the hands of God, and living with them in loving companionship through all their stainless years, is, or ought to be, like living in heaven, for of such is the heavenly kingdom. To no one of these am I more indebted than to the boy who went away from us before the world had touched him with a stain. The key that shut him in the tomb was the only key that could unlock my heart, and let in among its sympathies the world of sorrowing men and women who mourn because their little ones are not.

The little graves, alas! how many they are! The mourners above them, how vast the multitude! Brothers, sisters, I am one with you. I press your hands; I weep with you; I trust with you; I belong to you. Those waxen, folded hands; that still breast which I have so often pressed warm to my own; those sleep-bound eyes which have been so full of love and life; that sweet, unmoving alabaster face—ah! we have all looked upon them, and they have made us one and made us better. There is no fountain which the angel of healing troubles with his restless and life-giving wings so constantly as the fountain of tears, and only those too lame and bruised to bathe miss the blessed influence.

## WE TWO.—ANON.

It 's just a bit of a story, sir, that don't sound much to strangers, but I 'd like to tell you about it, if you have time to listen, for they 've all forgotten Bobbery down here, except me; they 're poor folks, you see, and things drift out of folks' heads when poverty drifts in.

Bobbery? Yes, sir, that was his name—leastways the name we gave him down here. As to a father or mother, we never had any, I think; never had any one in the wide world to belong to except our two selves—Bobbery and me. I was the eldest—two long years older than him; but then I was blind, you see, so the two years didn't count for much, and Bobbery got ahead of me after the time when the long days of pain slipped into lone night, and God shut me out of the world—not that I grumble, sir—I 've given over that; and Bobbery was always such a good lad to me that perhaps I didn't miss so much after all.

I grew to fancy things, and make believe I saw a great deal, particularly after Bobbery took to working at his trade—shoe-black, sir; and sometimes, when I became accustomed to being always in the dark, I went out with Bobbery, and held the money that he made.

Well, not much, perhaps, but enough for us two, and the little room we had down at Kingstown, over against the river; only Bobbery was an extravagant lad—not in drink, sir; we were always a sober lot—but in oranges.

They were almost his ruin, sir—those oranges. He used to come upstairs sucking them softly, so that I might not hear, and thinking to deceive me; but I somehow smelt oranges, and it always made me sharper to catch Bobbery whistling little tunes to himself on the way up, just to put me off.

He made a great deal of me, did Bobbery—along of being blind, you see—and so did the neighbours; but I was rare proud of him. You don't know what it is, sir, to sit alone in the dark all day, and then, on a sudden, to hear a fellow call out, 'Here we are again! Come down and feel the sun set, and we 'll count

the coppers!' It would make you love any one, sir, who had a voice like that, let alone a fellow like Bobbery.

Perhaps you didn't happen to be in Kingstown, sir, last spring, when the floods had risen, and the land was under water for miles around. Bobbery had to wade a little going down to his work, but he rather liked it, he said; and he used to tuck up his trousers, and call back to me and laugh, as the water crept around his feet; and he said folks wouldn't want their boots blacked, he feared, for the water would soon take off the polish.

I used to sit on the window-sill to feel the sun, and if I listened very hard I could hear the ripple-ripple of the shallow water at every step that Bobbery made, and it had a pleasant sound, and made a kind of company-feeling; but when he was out of hearing, and it still kept rippling up against our walls, the company-feeling went away and left me lonely, and sometimes I thought the water hateful, because it lay for so very long between me and Bobbery.

Well, once I was sitting alone on the window-sill, and the day was very quiet—so quiet that I did not hear the little rippling waves; and in the quiet I grew frightened at last, and stretched out my hands across the sill, to feel my way down. I felt something that made me shiver and draw back out of the sunlight—that made my whole dark life grow suddenly a beautiful and precious thing—I felt the water rippling almost up to the level of the sill, and I was quite alone, and Bobbery would never know.

I did not call out, or go mad with fright, as I thought at first I might do—only I crept away, in my everlasting darkness, from the warm sunlight, and sat down on the bed where Bobbery and I slept together, and put my hands over my ears, to shut out the roar of the waters.

How long I sat there I don't know, but I think it must have been for hours, for I felt the sunlight slanting on my face, and the water rushing around me before I moved again. I was hungry, too; but when I tried to get down and reach the cupboard, the water took me off my feet, and I crept back to the bed, and on to the shelves of the dresser, to be out of the way.

I said my prayers two or three times, and I said some prayers for Bobbery too, for I knew he would be sorry when he found me some day where I had died all alone, and in the dark. And then I tried to think how things looked from our window, with the water sweeping up to the very sill, and the red sunset lying on it—and beyond, the pretty town and the steeple with the clock; and I thought it was better for me to die than Bobbery, after all, for he could see, while I—I had no pleasures in my life. And yet I wanted to live; I wanted to hear Bobbery's voice again; I wanted the waters to go down, and somebody to remember me at last—for I was afraid.

Well, sir, God answers our prayers sometimes in a way that is terribly just. It takes us a long time to find out that everything is very good, I think; but we come to learn it at last—and learn, too, to leave our prayers as well as the answers to God. Somebody did remember me at last, and came back—somebody whose laughing voice across the waters was nearer every minute—somebody whose hands were on my shoulders, whose eyes, I felt, were on my face—somebody who had never forgotten me—Bobbery!

'Bobbery! Bobbery!' I cried, and I stretched out my arms to him.

Bobbery said, 'I came over in a tub—only think! such a lark! But as I climbed in at the window our tub drifted away, and however we 're to get over I can't tell.'

'You must think of something,' I said. 'Bobbery, it was a long day.'

'Why, of course it was,' Bobbery answered, 'without me. Come along, the river 's rising like fury.'

'Is it very wide?' I asked.

'Oh, not more 'n a good stretch from here to the dry land—but deep; over six feet, I should say, and rising.'

'But the bed, Bobbery,' I said, 'and the other things.'

'Well, we must just leave them until it 's all right again.'

'Will it ever be all right?' I asked.

'Why, yes, of course,' said Bobbery.

He was such a splendid chap, sir, was Bobbery, and so clever! He took the two chairs that were drifting about the room, and

tied them close together, and then we waded across to the window, and stood upon the sill.

'I think it's jolly good fun,' said Bobbery. 'If you could only see how your boat's bobbing up and down in front here! Get in quick, or I can't hold her. Here! port her helm, or something! Are you all right?'

'It's splendid,' I said; 'come along.'

But when Bobbery put his foot on to the unsteady raft, she went down on one side with a plunge. 'Never mind,' he said; 'you've just got to push yourself ashore with this pole, as straight as you can go, and I will follow.'

I thought that was true, or I never would have left Bobbery. I took the pole he gave me, and went out on the restless waters, that I felt were blood-red where the setting sun had touched them. People on the opposite side cheered, and cried, and called me, and Bobbery behind called out once or twice, 'Ship ahoy!' in a shrill voice that I knew and loved better than anything on earth; and once I heard him say faintly—he seemed so far away —'In port at last.'

At last!

The people on shore had ceased their shouts of excitement and encouragement; the light had died utterly away.

In an awful silence, and an awful darkness, I jumped to land, and held out my two hands.

'Bobbery! Bobbery!' I cried, 'I want to thank you.'

Did Bobbery hear, sir, do you think? Do people hear anything, do people understand anything, after they have gone away?'

I only knew that the awful silence was turning me to stone, that the awful darkness was rising like a stone wall between me and Bobbery—and I was afraid. When I called, no one answered me, and I was glad. If his voice was silent, any other voice would have maddened me just then, and I wanted nothing more to tell me all the truth. I learned through the silence on land and sea how God had answered my prayer.

They told me afterward how the plank he was launching to help himself to the shore drifted away from his hand, and was out of sight directly; how they would have saved him if they could;

and how, when they began to shout to him directions, he made a sign for silence, and stood straight upon the sill, with the sunset creeping all about him, and the waters washing at his feet. They wondered why he had made no effort to reach the shore with me—they used to wonder for long after why he had stood so silent, with his eager eyes, and restless feet so strangely still. I knew, of course; but what right had any one else to come between me and Bobbery? It wouldn't have done any one any good to know what I knew—that Bobbery wouldn't let me lose the faintest chance; thought my blind, helpless life quite as well worth saving as his own. I would have done the same for him, sir, any day—for Bobbery and me, we were always fond of each other.

The story 's been longer than I thought, sir, but just the evening, and the floods again, and your wanting to know about the cross, brought it back to me like the same evening somehow—and it 's company-like to talk of the lad.

And Bobbery? He just died, sir; and the folks thought such a deal of him that they collected a bit to set me up, and I took half of the money just to put up this little cross by the river-side —for we always divided the coppers, sir; and I haven't forgotten him—not in these two years!

That 's all, sir—just all about Bobbery.

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## HOW PIERRE GOBLET SAVED ST ANDRÉ.

MARIANNE KENT.

*(Abridged for Recitation.)*

He was not romantic to look at; indeed, there was something almost comic in the short, stout figure, clad in its washed-out blouse, and the wrinkled, sunburnt face under the faded *bonnet-rouge;* and yet in the heart of Pierre Goblet there were thoughts and feelings that might have done honour to some knight of old. For he was a patriot, this old French miller, fired with an enthusiasm that threescore years and ten had been unable to quench. His father had been one of the *Grande Armée* in the

great Emperor's time; and from his boyhood Pierre had held in loyal veneration the image of the little man in the gray coat who had led his conquering armies across Europe, and had made France a power to be dreaded far and wide. But many changes had passed over France since those days—changes that Pierre Goblet had watched with a sad heart.

In the summer of 1870, when the Franco-German war was at its height, Pierre Goblet stood one evening at the threshold of his home smoking his pipe. The old mill, which had belonged to the Goblets for many generations, was built on the summit of some rising ground, and could be seen for many miles. The miller's little cottage was attached to the mill, but no other house was near. A few miles away lay the town of St André, the town to which the Goblets belonged. The whole scene was very fair to look upon in its summer beauty. Rich pasture-lands and vineyards, and on the summit of the hill the picturesque old mill, with the quaint little town plainly discernible in the distance. On the other side of the hill, away from the town, was a wood of old trees which extended for many acres. Some of the trees, firs and others, were very ancient, and gave a dark, shadowy aspect to the whole.

The miller smoked thoughtfully as he gazed out before him along the white dusty road that led to the town. He was quite alone, for the few men he employed about the mill had gone to St André with a load of flour, and would not return with their empty wagons until the following day. It was a busy, anxious time for the inhabitants of St André, for they knew not when the Germans might be upon them, and they were preparing to hold their own against them, as St André was a fortified town, and, with proper care and precaution, they hoped to defend it at least against a sudden attack. For months past old Pierre had gone down to the village night after night to hear the last news, and to talk to the few men the war had left behind. The miller talked his heart out, trying to infect his neighbours with some of his own patriotic notions. But Pierre Goblet belonged to a bygone age, and the men, young and old, who gathered round him, although they listened respectfully enough, were too apathetic to understand him. They smoked and drank, while he, leaving the

red wine untasted in his glass, talked and gesticulated, his dim eyes growing bright with the fire within him. But he did more than talk; he urged the townspeople on to some purpose in their preparations to sustain a siege, and in these preparations he himself gave substantial aid, for he kept his mill going early and late, until he had ground sufficient corn to keep the town in bread for many months to come.

The twilight deepened as Pierre Goblet stood by the solitary mill, gazing dreamily out before him. He was so lost in thought that his pipe had died out unheeded, and he did not hear the sound of approaching footsteps. It was only when a heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder that he turned and found himself surrounded by some half-dozen big men in the Prussian uniform. Before Pierre had realised what had happened he had drifted, with the soldiers, into the cottage, and the door was closed upon them. The man who had first accosted him still kept his hand upon his arm; and as the miller looked at him he saw, from his dress and bearing, that he was an officer. He gave the old man a little impatient shake, as if to arrest his attention, and then addressed him in very fluent French.

'Monsieur le Miller, we have come to intrude ourselves upon your hospitality,' he said. 'Remember that you cannot say us no; so take matters with a good grace, and bring out quickly all your larder boasts in the way of meat and drink.'

Pierre Goblet saw that resistance was useless, and without a word he turned to obey. As he moved about he could hear the officer and his men talking eagerly together, but their tongue was an unintelligible jargon to him—he could not understand a word.

The officer seated himself at the table, and the men waited upon him before satisfying their own hunger. Then meat, bread, and wine were placed in a basket, and two of the men left the cottage carrying it between them. From the window Pierre Goblet watched them making their way in the direction of the wood. They were evidently taking food to some other officers who were left in charge of men there. It was too dark for Pierre to distinguish anything, but he felt certain that a large body of men—perhaps many thousands—were concealed among

the trees, only waiting until it was night that they might swoop down upon St André and take it by surprise.

The old miller's heart sank within him as he thought of the little town, whose fast approaching doom seemed inevitable. If only it were possible to warn the inhabitants of their danger! But he was a prisoner in his own home. An hour went by, and the daylight slowly faded. The officer who had taken possession of the cottage was joined by another, a younger man, and they sat together over the fire smoking and talking. Above the chimney-piece was a coloured print of the first Napoleon. It was a poor little picture, and did but scant justice to the handsome face it was supposed to represent; but the cocked-hat, the gray coat, and the faded red ribbon across the breast were all familiar to Pierre, and he had cherished the little portrait for many years. All at once the younger of the two Germans caught sight of it. He gave a derisive laugh, and, snatching it from the wall, tossed it upon the fire. There was a bright flame for an instant; then a scrap of black charred paper floated upwards in the smoke. With set teeth Pierre Goblet stood and watched. The expression of his face was inscrutable; but, as his eyes followed that black atom as it disappeared up the open chimney, a sudden moisture filled them that made the whole place swim. Then he went slowly from the room. He scarcely glanced at the outer door, where the soldiers were standing to prevent any one from passing out, but turned along a narrow passage to where a flight of wooden steps led up to the granary of the mill. He ascended them slowly, and pushed open the trap-door. The soldiers made no effort to detain him, for they knew that it was impossible that he could escape through the mill.

Pierre Goblet emerged into the granary, and closed the trap-door after him, and fastened it. He had no special object in going to the mill except that he might find solitude. He stood still and ruminated. On the whitened floor empty sacks and odds and ends were strewn about, and among them he noticed a large can that was filled with petroleum. He was always well supplied with this oil, for it was used for the many lamps about the mill; but having no further need for it at present, he had directed that this can should be taken in the last wagon and left

in the town, as he thought his daughter might find it useful in the time of siege when necessaries ran short. However, his instructions had been forgotten, and the petroleum remained behind. At another time the carelessness of his men would have annoyed him, but his mind was too full of a large trouble now for a small one to give him a second thought.

A wooden ladder ran up the side of the mill to the little door-like window that opened just behind the wheel. Pierre Goblet mounted the ladder, opened the window, and leaned out. Only a foot or two from him the great sails were going steadily round and round—the four huge arms that had been familiar to him since his childhood; and to him each had an individuality of its own. He knew them by the way the little bits of canvas had been patched and mended by his dexterous fingers; a scrap of brown canvas, that he had put in only a few days ago, caught his eye, and, as it passed him again and again, mechanically he counted the revolutions of the wheel, for his nerves were strained to such high tension that he scarcely knew what he did. On and on went the sails with their steady, monotonous motion, and the great wheel groaned and creaked in its socket.

Then Pierre Goblet turned his eyes away from the mill and looked straight before him, to where—a few miles distant—the little town lay; and he thought of its unconscious inhabitants. They little knew what that night would bring them, that to many it might be their last on earth. Next the old man looked towards the wood. It was grim, dark, impenetrable. But in his fancy he could see men armed to the teeth, who watched and waited, ready at the first word of command to spring upon their prey. Then Pierre Goblet lifted his head and looked up into the clear cool sky, where a few pale stars were shining. His lips did not move, but from his heart went up an agonised cry that he might be shown a way to help his countrymen. If he were even then upon the road he knew he should not have time to reach the town. Most likely a German bullet would find him out, and he would fall lifeless by the roadside, his work undone. How could he warn St André? Their preparations to receive the enemy were so nearly completed, and a few hours would make so much difference!

All at once the light of inspiration came into the old man's face; his eyes glowed with a sudden, eager hope. He did not hesitate for an instant. Carefully he clambered down the ladder back on to the granary floor. First he took a dark-lantern from a shelf and lighted it; next he found a long thin stick, which he placed with the lantern, ready for his use. Then he uncorked the can of petroleum, and carried it slowly and steadily up the ladder. He leaned from the little window as far as he was able, and tilted the can gently, so that a stream of oil fell upon the great sails as they passed. Again and again each arm in turn received its portion, until the wind-dried canvas was soaked through and through, and the ponderous wheel groaned and creaked more loudly under its increasing weight.

Pierre Goblet replaced the empty can, and taking up the lantern and the stick, he mounted the ladder once more. But before he proceeded with his operations he glanced in the direction of the town; then, pushing back the slide of the lantern, he lit the stick, and, leaning from the window, he fired his beacon! He touched each arm as it passed, and in an instant a huge wheel of fire, that could be seen for many miles, was whirling round.

Pierre Goblet knew that in a very short space the whole mill would be on fire. Still, that blazing wheel must attract attention, and one moment was enough to give an alarm.

The smell of fire, the noise of burning wood, brought the Germans hurrying from the cottage. But Pierre Goblet heeded them not. He stood there gazing from the window, though he was almost blinded by the flames as they passed close to him. There was a look of breathless expectation on his face, which, after a moment, changed to one of intense relief. For a strange conviction had come to him that the alarm was taken! He knew, as surely as if he had been among them, that at the eleventh hour the people realised their danger, and would be prepared.

The old man's eyes glowed with a rapturous happiness as he gazed up into the starry heavens with a mingled cry of gratitude and supplication. Then, as he felt that the fire and smoke were overpowering him, he roused himself for one last effort. Waving his hand towards the German soldiers, he shouted in a voice that rang out loud and clear, 'Vive la France!'

## THE GLASS RAILROAD.—GEORGE LIPPARD.

It seemed to me as though I had been suddenly aroused from my slumber. I looked around, and found myself in the centre of a gay crowd. The first sensation I experienced was that of being borne along with a peculiar motion. I looked around, and found that I was in a long train of cars which were gliding over a railway and seemed to be many miles in length. It was composed of many cars. Every car, open at the top, was filled with men and women, all gaily dressed and happy, and all laughing, talking, and singing. The peculiarly gentle motion of the cars interested me. There was no grating, such as we usually hear on the railroad. They moved along without the least jar or sound. This, I say, interested me. I looked over the side, and, to my astonishment, found the railroad and cars made of glass. The glass wheels moved over the glass rails without the least noise or oscillation. The soft gliding motion produced a feeling of exquisite happiness. I was happy! It seemed as if everything was at rest within—I was full of peace.

While I was wondering over this circumstance a new sight attracted my gaze. All along the road, within a foot of the track, were laid long lines of coffins on either side of the railroad, and every one contained a corpse dressed for burial, with its cold, white face turned upward to the light. The sight filled me with horror; I yelled in agony, but could make no sound. The gay throng who were around me only redoubled their singing and laughter at the sight of my agony, and we swept on, gliding on with glass wheels over the railroad, every moment coming nearer to the bend of the road, which formed an angle with the road far, far in the distance.

'Who are those?' I cried at last, pointing to the dead in the coffins.

'Those are the persons who made the trip before us,' was the reply of one of the gayest persons near me.

'What trip?' I asked.

'Why, the trip you are now making; the trip on this glass railroad,' was the answer.

'Why do they lie along the road, each one in his coffin?'

I was answered with a whisper and a half-laugh which froze my blood:

'They were dashed to death at the end of the railroad,' said the person whom I addressed.

'You know the railroad terminates at an abyss which is without bottom or measure. It is lined with pointed rocks. As each car arrives at the end it precipitates its passengers into the abyss. They are dashed to pieces against the rocks, and their bodies are brought here and placed in the coffins as a warning to other passengers; but no one minds it, we are so happy on the glass railroad.'

I can never describe the horror with which those words inspired me.

'What is the name of the glass railroad?' I asked.

The person whom I asked replied in the same strain:

'It is very easy to get into the cars, but very hard to get out. For, once in these, everybody is delighted with the soft, gliding motion. The cars move gently. Yes, this is a railroad of habit, and with glass wheels we are whirled over a glass railroad towards a fathomless abyss. In a few moments we 'll be there, and they 'll bring our bodies and put them in coffins as a warning to others; but nobody will mind it, will they?'

I was choked with horror. I struggled to breathe—made frantic efforts to leap from the cars, and in the struggle I awoke. I know it was only a dream, and yet, whenever I think of it, I can see that long train of cars moving gently over the glass railroad. I can see cars far ahead, as they are turning the bend of the road. I can see the dead in their coffins, clear and distinct, on either side of the road; while the laughing and singing of the gay and happy passengers resound in my ears I only see the cold faces of the dead, with their glassy eyes uplifted and their frozen hands upon their shrouds.

It was indeed a horrible dream. A long train of glass cars, gliding over a glass railway, freighted with youth, beauty, and music, while on either hand are stretched the victims of yesterday—gliding over the railway of habit toward the fathomless abyss.

There was a moral in that dream.

Reader, are you addicted to any sinful habit? Break it off ere you dash against the rocks.

## 'THE PALACE OF GOLDEN DEEDS.'

ELLA WILLIAMSON.

*(Abridged for Recitation.)*

The evening sunlight was casting long slanting rays across the alleys of roses in the palace garden at Chandnapur, the heat was abating, and the king came forth upon the terrace to enjoy the cool air. A servant appeared with a profound salaam, saying that a wandering minstrel was at the gate, and the order was given that he should be brought in. Seating himself cross-legged upon the ground, he tuned his lute and sang songs of war and peace, finally making his hero end his career in a palace of gold and marble built in the Himalayas and looking upon the eternal snows.

The little party on the terrace consisted of the king, his only son, Prince Ahmed, a fine young fellow of twenty, and the Vizier, a clever and humane man, who had received the name of Yusuf the Good by universal acclamation. After the minstrel departed they sat and smoked in a silence broken only by the bubbling of the water in the hookah and the soft cooing of doves among the trees.

Suddenly the king started up, saying, 'I too will have a palace in the Himalayas built of marble and roofed with gold. We are at peace with all our enemies; our treasure is great. What say you, Yusuf; is it not well thought of?'

Without waiting for a reply, he continued: 'You will go and get the palace built, and we will follow ere the hot weather comes to parch the plains of Hindustan. You will get marble from the quarries in our own territory, and it will be roofed with gold. What a wonder it will be! It will seem as if it were built out of the snow-peaks and the sunshine; and all men will speak of the new wonder of Hindustan, the Golden Palace of King Azuf Ali.'

The king of Chandnapur was originally a brave warrior and a good enough ruler as these times went, but he had gradually become a despot, from the mere fact that no one ever contra-

dicted him! However, as he had a great regard for his Vizier, and was, though unconsciously, much influenced by him, things went on fairly well. But now and again, as in the present instance, some new fancy or whim took possession of him so vehemently that it was not possible to turn him from it. Yusuf received orders to depart speedily with camel-loads of treasure and skilled workmen to carry out plans which the king had drawn out himself. Yusuf was in despair; so many things would be at a standstill in his absence, and famine was beginning to press heavily on the people. Prince Ahmed, too, was sorrowful; for, unknown to his father, he loved Amina, the beautiful daughter of the Vizier. Yusuf would carry his household with him, and the presence of Amina would no longer brighten Chandnapur.

In less than a month everything was ready, and Yusuf, with a long train of camels and a considerable retinue, passed out of the city gates.

After a time a messenger came on a swift dromedary, saying that Yusuf had found a beautiful valley at the foot of the Himalayas with a suitable site for the palace in Khasnath, the most distant part of the kingdom. He also mentioned that famine had begun to do its terrible work, and the people were dying of hunger and disease in all directions. The king thought only of the palace, but Prince Ahmed asked about the famine, and heard terrible tales of people dying of pestilence by the roadside or in the midst of cities and villages, no one daring to touch them. There were many sick in the valley, the messenger said, and many orphans; but Yusuf the Good had a like-minded daughter, and she had turned an old ruinous palace, called the 'Lall Kothi,' into a home for the sick and the orphans, and tended them herself from morning to night.

After a little time an imploring appeal came from Yusuf that he might be allowed to use the treasure he had taken to help and save the people dying all around him. In Chandnapur prices were exorbitant. There was great scarcity, but not absolute famine; so the king merely sent back an angry reply that he would start at the appointed time, and if the palace was not ready woe betide them!

No further intelligence came except an enigmatical message that the desire of the king would be fulfilled, and all would be well.

At the time fixed—early in March according to our reckoning—the king and all his great retinue set out. For some days after leaving Chandnapur they journeyed through a comparatively fertile country. When the tents were pitched under the shade of great tamarind or neem trees, the country-people came offering supplies of fowls, milk, eggs, &c.; but soon all this ceased. Instead of the winter crops being reaped, the fields stood untilled; and as they drew near Gopur, the territory of a Hindu Rajah, the desolation became more and more striking—the bare fields had no cattle, the villages were almost deserted, while dead bodies or portions of skeletons strewed the ground. The water in the wells was tainted; the very air seemed heavy; and, worst of all, the pestilence which followed the famine broke out in the king's camp. His oldest and wisest advisers begged him to turn from this ill-fated journey; but his sole answer was to point onwards to the Himalayas rising in their wondrous snow-peaks, and, leaving the sick to die or recover as they might, they pressed onwards.

They were now in the territory of Khasnath, and were within twenty-four hours' journey of the valley among the wooded peaks of the lower Himalayas, where Yusuf said he had found a site for the palace. There was now a wonderful change in the face of the country; canals intersected the wide plain; the ryots were working in their fields, reaping their spring crops, watering their plots of vegetables and their fruit-trees which lined the roads. There was scarcity, no doubt; food was dear, and supplies of all kinds came in slowly; but the awful scenes which had met their eyes as they marched along the borders of the Gopur territory were nowhere visible, while the praises of Yusuf the Good rang out upon the air from every village which they passed.

The king's impatience to reach his destination was so great that they made a second march in the cool of the evening to get over the low wooded ridge which lay between them and the valley. Just before reaching the height, as the king was carried along in his *palki*, while the bearers chanted their monotonous

song and Prince Ahmed walked alongside, a strange figure appeared, as if by magic, in the middle of the path.

He wore the yellow cloth of a fakir and a white flannel cap, the Brahminical thread was across his shoulder, from his ears hung great ear-rings of carved bone, in one hand he carried his begging-bowl made of a gourd, and in the other was a long staff.

'I have come, O king,' he said, 'for the first time for long years, from the mountains where I dwell ever among the stars and the mighty torrents, to warn thee that before thee lie the paths of life and of death; the gods give thee a choice, and if thou dost choose the evil and reject the good, on thine own head be the peril.' As he uttered the last words he vanished among the great trees and the undergrowth which was all around their path, as suddenly and silently as he had come.

They reached the summit of the ridge just as the sun was setting; the town and lake of Khasnath lay at the upper end of a wide fertile valley dotted with villages which were surrounded by mango and peach orchards, showing dark among the fertile fields.

A few miles down they reached the camp which had been hurriedly prepared, and in the morning hastened on again. The king was not at all pleased that Yusuf had not come to meet him, forgetting the rapid way in which they had got over their journey.

About an hour after they started on their march the cry arose: 'Yusuf, Yusuf the Good comes to meet the preserver of the faithful;' and in a few minutes Yusuf appeared and knelt to welcome his king. He was pale and worn, but looked calm and serene, and in answer to all the king's eager inquiries about the Golden Palace, asked him to wait and see it for himself.

Meanwhile he attended the king, and pointed out to him the cultivated fields, the irrigation works, the fruit-trees loaded with fruit, the cheerful, happy people. It was all in vain; the king would look at nothing, think of nothing; his one cry was, 'Where is my palace?'

They journeyed on past the banks of the lake, past the city with its minarets and temples, past more fields and orchards and villages, till at last they came close to the Himalayas. There, on a spur of the hill jutting out into the valley, rose a large building

of brown wood, beautifully carved and surrounded by lovely gardens full of roses and creepers; but the king would not look at it, and still expected that round some corner would appear the Golden Palace.

When they arrived on the broad terrace facing down the valley and looking through a gorge in the hills to the snows, Yusuf requested the king to descend from the *palki* (which was made of solid silver, with curtains of cashmere shawls). He then said: 'O king, preserver of the faithful, live for ever, and forgive thy slave for what he has done. When he came here he found poverty and death all around. How could he spend the king's treasure so well as in saving his people? So the gold that should have covered the roof of the palace was spent in averting the ruin and disaster which would have otherwise come upon Khasnath the fertile, the beautiful, the brightest jewel in the king's dominions.'

The king listened in a kind of stupor, then said, scowling, 'Villain, what hast thou done? Where is my palace?'

'Here, O king,' said Yusuf, pointing to the building beside them, which was adorned with beautiful carved verandas and pillars of brown sheshem wood. 'This palace was built by the people of Khasnath, and carved, as you see, with every beauteous device, in token of their love and gratitude. All has been done, the plateau cut, the paths made, the gardens planted; all is the service of love; not one pice has been spent on it;' and as Yusuf spoke a glow of joy suffused his noble features, while a low murmur of applause came from the bystanders.

From the king alone came no response. His brow grew black as night; then he cried, foaming with rage, 'Dog, slave, wouldst thou cheat me thus? What care I for love and gratitude, forsooth! Thou shalt die, and that speedily.'

To his guards he said, 'Take this man, keep him safely on your peril; and, ere the first beam of sunshine touches the brow of the mountain, cut off his head.'

Then thrusting aside Prince Ahmed, who vainly tried to intercede for his old friend, he retired sullenly to his chamber, and refused admittance to all.

Completely wearied out by the journey and by his own rage,

he went early to rest. But sleep would not come to him, woo her as he might. The bygone years when Yusuf had been his trusted adviser rose up before him, and when he thought of his loyalty as prime minister and of his bravery in the old days when they rode together in the thickest of the fight, he tossed and groaned in bitterness of spirit, but never altered his cruel resolve. Die he must and should.

About midnight he fell asleep, and as he slept it seemed that a shining angel stood beside his bed, took him by the hand, and lifted him up and up, far above the snowy range to the very gates of Paradise. Passing in, they went on till they came to a palace of gold and marble, inlaid with the richest gems, of the most harmonious proportions and beautiful design.

'Wonderful!' cried the king. 'Here is my palace, the very structure I dreamed of, but far, far more beautiful than mortal eyes ever beheld.'

'*Thy* palace,' said the angel, and there was a touch of scorn in the sweet voice; 'that is the palace of Yusuf the Good. It is a palace of golden deeds, built up of all his good actions—his justice, his truthfulness; above all, his compassion for the poor and suffering. See, thou canst read the blessings of the poor on every part of the building, and their prayers are the gems that enrich it. *Thy* palace, sayest thou? What good deeds have reared a palace for thee? None, in all thy long life, filled with self-love, greed, ambition, cruelty, and now crowned with the blackest deed of all, the murder of the faithful servant who saved with incredible efforts your poor people from death by plague and famine.'

An awful dread fell upon the king. The form of the angel seemed to tower above him like an avenging spirit, crying, 'Go, go from Paradise to the blackness of darkness for ever!'

The unhappy man fell rapidly downwards, and in his agony he awoke. The words 'the murder of Yusuf' rang in his ears. Was it dawn? Rushing out, he demanded of the guards, like a man distraught, if the sun had yet risen.

It had not, but the tom-toms were beating and the solemn procession was forming. In a few minutes more it would have been too late.

Prince Ahmed, the guards, Yusuf himself, all were astounded when they saw the figure of the king, half-clad and regardless of all ceremony, rushing wildly from the palace. He threw himself on Yusuf's neck, imploring his forgiveness with tears. He then told his dream, and asked Yusuf to teach him also to build a 'Palace of Golden Deeds.'

It is needless to dwell on the joy of the people, on Prince Ahmed's relief, or on the true gladness which filled Yusuf's heart when he found that the change wrought on the king was a lasting one. From that night, with its terrible experience, he was a different man, and during the rest of his reign strove with all his might to build for himself a 'Palace of Golden Deeds.'

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## THE MAN WITH A GOLDEN BRAIN.

ALPHONSE DAUDET.

There was once upon a time a man who had a brain of gold —yes, entirely of gold. When he came into the world the physicians thought he would not live, his head was so heavy and his skull so large.

He lived, nevertheless, and flourished like a beautiful olive-tree; only his head was too heavy for him, and it was pitiful to see him bump into the furniture when he walked. He fell often. One day he stumbled from a stoop, and knocked his forehead against a marble step. The concussion produced a strangely metallic sound.

They thought he was dead, but on lifting him they found a slight abrasion and two or three drops of gold clotted in his blonde hair.

It was thus his parents learned that the child had a brain of gold, a marvellous gift that must mean great pleasure to him or years of pain and sorrow.

It was kept a secret, the poor child suspecting nothing himself. From time to time he asked why he was not allowed to play in front of the house with the other boys of the street, or to

wander away to the woods to gather flowers, or go to the river to bathe.

'Somebody would steal you, my beautiful treasure,' responded his mother.

After this he became afraid of being stolen, and played quietly alone, moving heavily from one room to another without a word of protest.

When he was eighteen years old his parents told him of the monstrous gift he had received from destiny, and asked him for the return of a little gold for having reared and nourished him.

The youth did not hesitate. That same hour—how, by what means, the legend does not say—he tore from his skull a massive piece of gold the size of a nut, and flung it proudly into his mother's lap. Then, dazzled by the wealth he carried in his head, a fool in his desires, he left the paternal roof and went out into the world to waste his treasure, with no recognition of the wondrous privilege that was conferred upon him.

It seems, from his royal manner of living and his scattering of uncounted gold, that his brain was inexhaustible. It was decreasing nevertheless, and one could see that his eyes were growing dull and his cheeks were becoming hollow.

One morning, after a foolish debauch, as he sat surrounded by the débris of the festival and the fading lights, he was shocked at the inroads he had made on his ingots, the drafts that he, a prodigy, had made on his wondrous store.

It was time to stop!

From this time on he led a new existence. The man with the golden brain went off by himself, and lived by the toil of his hands, suspicious and fearful as a miser, flying from temptations, and attempting to forget the fatal riches which he did not want to touch again.

Fortunately, a friend who knew his secret had followed him into his solitude.

One night the poor man woke suddenly with a pain in his head—an intolerable pain. Raising himself quickly in bed, he saw by a ray of moonlight his friend in flight attempting to hide something under the folds of his mantle.

Again he had lost a little of his golden store, that treasure that meant so much to him.

Some time after this the man with the golden brain fell in love, and then all was over with him. He loved with all his heart a little blonde woman who loved him also; but she loved still better top-knots, white feathers, and tassels in her boots. In the hands of this pretty creature, half-bird, half-doll, the gold melted away. She was full of caprices, and he did not know how to say no. For fear of paining her he hid his sad secret carefully from her in every way.

'We are very rich, then?' she said.

The poor man responded, 'Oh yes; very rich.'

And he sighed under his breath as he spoke.

And he smiled lovingly at the little bluebird who was eating his brain so innocently. At times he would have fears and feel that he must be miserly, and then his little wife would come dancing up and say to him, 'My husband, you are so rich, buy me something very dear.' And he bought her something very dear, something she longed for.

Thus matters went on for two years, and then one morning the little wife died—as a bird dies—no one knew why.

The treasure was nearly gone, but with what remained the young widower gave his beloved dead a beautiful interment. There were chimes, coaches draped in black, horses with plumes, tears of silver on the black velvet draperies—nothing was too good. What was gold to him now? He gave it to the Church, to the bearers, the women selling immortelles, to everybody without question, and when he came out of the cemetery he had nothing left of his marvellous brain except a few scattered particles.

Presently he was seen in the streets staggering like a drunken man, feeling his way with his hands before him, his expression bewildered. That evening when the shops were lighted he stopped before a large window in which was a confusion of stuffs brilliant under the flood of light. He stood a long time looking at two blue satin boots bordered with swan's-down. 'I know some one to whom these boots would give great pleasure,' said he to himself, and, no longer remembering that his little

wife was dead, he entered the shop to buy them, thinking of the pleasure they would give.

From the back part of the store the proprietress heard a great cry. She ran forward, but recoiled in fear on seeing a man standing near the counter looking at her in stupid anguish. In one hand he held the blue boots with their fur border; in the other, covered with blood, he held out to her a few scrapings of gold.

This is the legend of the man with the golden brain, and, despite its fantastic air, it is true from one end to the other. There are poor people in the world who are condemned to live by their brain and to pay in fine gold—their sap and their substance—for the smallest things in life. Each day for them is sorrow, and at last when they are tired of suffering—— then is the end.

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## THE LAST OF LITTLE PAUL.—CHARLES DICKENS.

Little Dombey had never risen from his little bed. He lay there, listening to the noises in the street, quite tranquilly, not caring much how the time went, but watching it and watching everything.

When the sunbeams struck into his room through the rustling blinds, and quivered on the opposite wall, like golden water, he knew that evening was coming on, and that the sky was red and beautiful. As the reflection died away, and a gloom went creeping up the wall, he watched it deepen, deepen, deepen into night. Then he thought how the long unseen streets were dotted with lamps, and how the peaceful stars were shining overhead. His fancy had a strange tendency to wander to the River, which he knew was flowing through the great city; and now he thought how black it was, and how deep it would look reflecting the hosts of stars; and, more than all, how steadily it rolled away to meet the sea.

As it grew later in the night, and footsteps in the street became so rare that he could hear them coming, count them as they passed, and lose them in the hollow distance, he would lie and

watch the many-coloured ring about the candle, and wait patiently for day. His only trouble was the swift and rapid river. He felt forced, sometimes, to try and stop it—to stem it with his childish hands, or choke its way with sand; and when he saw it coming on, resistless, he cried out! But a word from Florence, who was always at his side, restored him to himself; and, leaning his poor head upon her breast, he told Floy of his dream, and smiled.

When day began to dawn again he watched for the sun; and when its cheerful light began to sparkle in the room he pictured to himself—pictured! he saw—the high church-towers rising up into the morning sky, the town reviving, waking, starting into life once more, the river glistening as it rolled (but rolling fast as ever), and the country bright with dew. Familiar sounds and cries came by degrees into the street below; the servants in the house were roused and busy; faces looked in at the door, and voices asked his attendants softly how he was. Paul always answered for himself, 'I am better. I am a great deal better, thank you! Tell papa so!'

By little and little he got tired of the bustle of the day, the noise of carriages and carts, and people passing and repassing, and would fall asleep, or be troubled with a restless and uneasy sense again. 'Why, will it never stop, Floy?' he would sometimes ask her. 'It is bearing me away, I think!'

But she could always soothe and reassure him; and it was his daily delight to make her lay her head down on his pillow and take some rest.

'You are always watching me, Floy. Let me watch *you* now!'

They would prop him up with cushions in a corner of his bed, and there he would recline, the while she lay beside him—bending forward oftentimes to kiss her, and whispering to those who were near that she was tired, and how she had sat up so many nights beside him. Thus the flush of the day, in its heat and light, would gradually decline; and again the golden water would be dancing on the wall.

The people round him changed unaccountably, and what had been the doctor would be his father, sitting with his head leaning on his hand. This figure, with its head leaning on its hand,

returned so often, and remained so long, and sat so still and solemn, never speaking, never being spoken to, and rarely lifting up its face, that Paul began to wonder languidly if it were real.

'Floy! What *is* that?'

'Where, dearest?'

'There! at the bottom of the bed.'

'There 's nothing there, except papa!'

The figure lifted up its head and rose, and, coming to the bedside, said:

'My own boy! Don't you know me?'

Paul looked it in the face. Before he could reach out both his hands to take it between them and draw it towards him, the figure turned away quickly from the little bed, and went out at the door.

The next time he observed the figure sitting at the bottom of the bed, he called to it.

'Don't be so sorry for me, dear papa. Indeed, I am quite happy!'

His father coming and bending down to him, he held him round the neck, and repeated those words to him several times, and very earnestly; and he never saw his father in his room again at any time, whether it were day or night, but he called out, 'Don't be so sorry for me! Indeed, I am quite happy!' This was the beginning of his always saying in the morning that he was a great deal better, and that they were to tell his father so. How many times the golden water danced upon the wall, how many nights the dark river rolled towards the sea in spite of him, Paul never sought to know. If their kindness, or his sense of it, could have increased, they were more kind, and he more grateful, every day; but whether there were many days or few appeared of little moment now to the gentle boy.

One night he had been thinking of his mother and her picture in the drawing-room downstairs. The train of thought suggested to him to inquire if he had ever seen his mother. For he could not remember whether they had told him yes or no; the river running very fast, and confusing his mind.

'Floy, did I ever see mamma?'

'No, darling. Why?'

'Did I never see any kind face, like a mamma's, looking at me when I was a baby, Floy?'

'Oh yes, dear!'

'Whose, Floy?'

'Your old nurse's. Often.'

'And where is my old nurse? Show me that old nurse, Floy, if you please!'

'She is not here, darling. She shall come to-morrow.'

'Thank you, Floy!'

Little Dombey closed his eyes with those words, and fell asleep. When he awoke the sun was high, and the broad day was clear and warm. Then he awoke—woke mind and body—and sat upright in his bed. He saw them now about him. There was no gray mist before them, as there had been sometimes in the night. He knew them every one, and called them by their names.

'And who is this? Is this my old nurse?' asked the child, regarding, with a radiant smile, a figure coming in.

Yes, yes. No other stranger would have shed those tears at sight of him, and called him her dear boy, her pretty boy, her own poor blighted child. No other woman would have stooped down by his bed, and taken up his wasted hand, and put it to her lips and breast, as one who had some right to fondle it. No other woman would have so forgotten everybody there but him and Floy, and been so full of tenderness and pity.

'Floy! this is a kind, good face! I am glad to see it again. Don't go away, old nurse. Stay here! Good-bye!'

'Good-bye, my child!' cried Mrs Pipchin, hurrying to his bed's head. 'Not good-bye!'

'Ah, yes! Good-bye!—where is papa?'

His father's breath was on his cheek before the words had parted from his lips. The feeble hand waved in the air, as if it cried 'Good-bye!' again.

'Now lay me down; and, Floy, come close to me, and let me see you.'

Sister and brother wound their arms around each other, and the golden light came streaming in, and fell upon them, locked together.

'How fast the river runs, between its green banks and the rushes, Floy! But it's very near the sea now. I hear the waves! They always said so!'

Presently he told her that the motion of the boat upon the stream was lulling him to rest. Now the boat was out at sea. And now there was a shore before him. Who stood on the bank!——

He put his hands together, as he had been used to do at his prayers. He did not remove his arms to do it, but they saw him fold them so, behind his sister's neck.

'Mamma is like you, Floy. I know her by the face! But tell them that the picture on the stairs at school is not Divine enough. The light about the head is shining on me as I go.'

. . . . . .

The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room. The old, old fashion! The fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death!

Oh, thank God, all who see it, for that older fashion yet, of Immortality! And look upon us, Angels of young children, with regards not quite estranged, when the swift river bears us to the ocean!

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## THE DIGNITY OF LABOUR.—Newman Hall.

There is dignity in toil—in toil of the hand as well as toil of the head—in toil to provide for the bodily wants of an individual life, as well as in toil to promote some enterprise of world-wide fame. All labour that tends to supply man's wants, to increase man's happiness, to elevate man's nature—in a word, all labour that is honest—is honourable too. Labour clears the forest and drains the morass, and makes 'the wilderness rejoice and blossom as the rose.' Labour drives the plough, and scatters the seeds and reaps the harvest, and grinds the corn, and converts it into bread, the staff of life. Labour, tending the pastures and sweeping the waters, as well as cultivating the soil, provides with daily sustenance

the nine hundred millions of the family of man. Labour gathers the gossamer web of the caterpillar, the cotton from the field, and the fleece from the flock, and weaves it into raiment soft and warm and beautiful, the purple robe of the prince and the gray gown of the peasant being alike its handiwork. Labour moulds the brick, and splits the slate, and quarries the stone, and shapes the column, and rears not only the humble cottage but the gorgeous palace and the tapering spire and the stately dome. Labour, diving deep into the solid earth, brings up its long-hidden stores of coal to feed ten thousand furnaces, and in millions of homes to defy the winter's cold.

Labour explores the rich veins of deeply-buried rocks, extracting the gold and silver, the copper and tin. Labour smelts the iron, and moulds it into a thousand shapes for use and ornament, from the massive pillar to the tiniest needle, from the ponderous anchor to the wire gauze, from the mighty fly-wheel of the steam-engine to the polished purse-ring or the glittering bead. Labour hews down the gnarled oak, and shapes the timber, and builds the ship, and guides it over the deep, plunging through the billows and wrestling with the tempest, to bear to our shores the produce of every clime.

Labour, laughing at difficulties, spans majestic rivers, carries viaducts over marshy swamps, suspends bridges over deep ravines, pierces the solid mountain with its dark tunnel, blasting rocks and filling hollows; and, while linking together with its iron but loving grasp all nations of the earth, verifying, in a literal sense, the ancient prophecy, 'Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low.' Labour draws forth its delicate iron thread, and stretching it from city to city, from province to province, through mountains and beneath the sea, realises more than fancy ever fabled, while it constructs a chariot on which speech may outstrip the wind, and compete with the lightning, for the telegraph flies as rapidly as thought itself.

Labour, a mighty magician, walks forth into a region uninhabited and waste; he looks earnestly at the scene, so quiet in its desolation; then waving his wonder-working wand, those dreary valleys smile with golden harvests; those barren mountain-slopes are clothed with foliage; the furnace blazes; the anvil rings; the

busy wheel whirls round; the town appears; the mart of commerce, the hall of science, the temple of religion, rear high their lofty fronts; a forest of masts, gay with varied pennons, rises from the harbour; representatives of far-off regions make it their resort; Science enlists the elements of earth and heaven in its service; Art, awakening, clothes its strength with beauty; Civilisation smiles; Liberty is glad; Humanity rejoices; Piety exults; for the voice of industry and gladness is heard on every side.

Working men, walk worthy of your vocation! You have a noble escutcheon; disgrace it not. There is nothing really mean and low but sin. Stoop not from your lofty throne to defile yourselves by contamination with intemperance, licentiousness, or any form of evil. Labour, allied with virtue, may look up to heaven and not blush, while all worldly dignities, prostituted to vice, will leave their owner without a corner of the universe in which to hide his shame. You will most successfully prove the honour of toil by illustrating in your own persons its alliance with a sober, righteous, and godly life. Be ye sure of this, that the man of toil, who works in a spirit of obedient, loving homage to God, does no less than cherubim and seraphim in their loftiest flights and holiest songs.

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## HOW TIM'S PRAYER WAS ANSWERED.—ANON.

'It's a staving night for a supper—a hot supper, too!' said Tim Mulligan to himself as he stood at the street corner in the piercing wind and sleet.

'A staving night,' he reiterated, as he peered wistfully into the bakery windows across the way. He had not had any dinner at all, and not enough breakfast to say so—nothing but a crust or two that he had picked up.

A little, humpbacked, stunted figure, with dull blue eyes, and thin, peaked face surmounted by a brimless hat; his clothes evidently odds and ends—for the pants were too large and long, while the coat-sleeves came scarcely below his elbows, and the garment would not begin to button around him—that was Tim.

'It's a bad night,' he said, as a gust of wind nearly took him off

his feet—'the worst I ever knew,' which was saying a good deal, for Tim had known some pretty rough nights in the course of his short life. 'There isn't much show of my getting anything to-night. Guess I'd better be turnin' in, pervided nobody's gone and took possession of my 'stablishment.'

But just as Tim was bracing himself up to face the storm, some one came driving down the street at a furious rate, stopping so close to Tim that he took a step to get out of the way.

'Here, bub, hold my horse for me,' said the gentleman, springing out; and, handing the reins to Tim, he disappeared.

'P'r'aps he'll give me as much as—threepence,' thought Tim when he had thoughtfully obeyed. 'If he does, I'll have a plate of hot beans and biscuits. P'r'aps he'll give me a tanner. Wouldn't I have a reg'lar square meal then! But 'taint likely.'

Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed. Tim's hands were thoroughly benumbed when at last the gentleman returned in as much haste as he had gone away.

'Here's something for you,' he said, dropping a couple of coins into Tim's hand, then springing into his buggy.

Tim went under the nearest gaslight to examine it.

'Je-ru-sa-lum!' he gasped, as he saw two bright silver coins in his rather grimy hands. A shilling seemed a small fortune to Tim, for there were so few things a poor little hunchback like him could do.

He would have such a supper!—baked beans, biscuit, and a cup of coffee, and even a doughnut; he could have all that, and still have some money left for to-morrow. The richest man in the whole great city would have felt poor beside Tim as, clutching his treasure, he crossed the street. There, crouching in the shadow of a doorway, he spied two miserably forlorn little figures.

'Hello!' he said. 'What you doin' here?'

'Nuthin,' replied the oldest briefly.

'What makes you stay here, then? Why don't you go home?' continued Tim.

'Hain't got none,' was the reply; and then, feeling the hearty though unspoken sympathy of one of their own sort, the little waif added, as he drew his jacket-sleeve across his eyes, 'They carried

mother up to the graveyard, yonder'—pointing in the direction of the pauper burial-ground—'and we hasn't anybody now, nor nowheres to stay.'

As Tim stood deliberating, the bakery door opened and a most appetising odour came out, reminding Tim of his promised treat.

'Hungry?' he asked.

'You bet!' was the inelegant but emphatic response.

Tim reflected on his own real good fortune. He could get biscuits, cold beans, and perhaps doughnuts enough for them all.

'Tell you what, fellers,' he said magnificently, 'I was just agoin' to order my bill of fare. I'll increase my order a little, have a party, and invite you two. As it 's rather suddint, we won't none of us bother 'bout party clo'es. 'Greeable?'

'Reckon we air,' was the quick response. Tim made a dive for the bakery, trying hard not to smell the coffee, nor think how much better a plate of hot beans would be than the same cold.

'Now,' he said, reappearing, 'all aboard. Follow me sharp.'

You may be sure the two little ragamuffins did as they were bidden.

''Taint much farther,' said Tim at length. 'I'm a little s'lect in my tastes, you see; so I live rather out of the way o' folks,' laughed he.

Presently they struck the railroad, and then in a few minutes he stopped before an unused, dilapidated flag-house.

'Walk in,' he said, politely holding open the door, which was only a plank. There certainly was not much room to spare when they were all in, but then they were sheltered, and all the warmer for being obliged to keep close together.

'Reckon we 'd better interduce before grub, hadn't we? I 'm Tim Mulligan—at your service, an' happy to meet you.'

'The boys in the alley call us Speckle-Face and Red-Top. I 'm Speckle-Face, and he 's Red-Top,' said the spokesman.

'Now we 're all right, and old friends,' said Tim complacently. 'Let 's pitch in.'

He had spread the contents of his parcels on an old box, and, without waiting for another invitation, didn't they 'pitch in!' Tim watched them with solid satisfaction, contenting himself with

one small biscuit and half a doughnut. 'I 'm not so very pertic'ler about beans. Guess I won't indulge to-night,' he said.

It did not take very long to clear up, even to the last crumb of Tim's spread.

'Now, sirs,' said the brave little host when it was gone and the guests showed signs of departing, 'my accommerdations are not so very grand, but they are better than the storm. You 'd better stop over night.'

As his guests made no remonstrance to this suggestion, he made ready a bed for them—a little straw and a part of an old blanket.

'You bundle up together, and you 'll stand it, I guess,' said Tim.

'You 're an awful good feller,' said Speckle-Face gratefully, as he pulled the blanket up round him, and in less than five minutes both were sound asleep.

It was cold over by the door, which did not quite fit, and Tim missed his blanket, but did not say anything. Something came to him as he lay there shivering. Sometimes he had crept into a church because it was warm there; he had caught at such times snatches of sermons about One who once lived on earth, was homeless, poor, and lonely—'like us fellers,' thought Tim. But now this mysterious One was great, rich, and powerful, and had a beautiful home. And those who would love and try to please Him could go and live with Him. He thought it over, as the bitter wind and storm came through the cracks upon him. He drew as far away as possible, up beside his little visitors, who lay sleeping so peacefully.

'I wonder if Jesus 'd listen to a poor hunchy like me.' And clasping his stiff little hands, Tim knelt and made his first prayer: 'Dear Lord, I don't know who you are, nor where you live, but I wish you 'd take me to your home, for I am so tired and hungry and cold. And I 'll do everything I can, if you 'll tell me how, Won't you please take me? Amen.'

Then Tim lay down again, and somehow he did not mind the cold as before.

'I—wonder—when—He 'll take me—and how I 'll get there,' he thought dreamingly.

It was broad daylight before the two little visitors awoke, threw off the blanket, and sat up.

'Hello!' said Speckle-Face; but Tim did not stir.

'Hello!' piped Red-Top.

Then Speckle-Face shook him, but still Tim's eyes did not open, and Red-Top, putting his hand out on his face, started back in terror.

'He 's cold, like she was,' he sobbed.

Tim's prayer had been answered; he had gone to that home where they shall hunger no more.

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## THE TWO ROADS.—Jean Paul Richter.

It was New Year's night. An aged man was standing at a window. He mournfully raised his eyes towards the deep blue sky, where the stars were floating like white lilies on the surface of a clear, calm lake. Then he cast them on the earth, where few more helpless beings than himself were moving towards their inevitable goal—the tomb. Already he had passed sixty of the stages which lead to it, and he had brought from his journey nothing but errors and remorse. His health was destroyed, his mind unfurnished, his heart sorrowful, and his old age devoid of comfort.

The days of his youth rose up in a vision before him, and he recalled the solemn moment when his father had placed him at the entrance of two roads, one leading into a peaceful, sunny land, covered with a fertile harvest, and resounding with soft, sweet songs; while the other conducted the wanderer into a deep, dark cave, whence there was no issue, where poison flowed instead of water, and where serpents hissed and crawled.

He looked towards the sky, and cried out, in his anguish, 'O youth, return! O my father, place me once more at the crossway of life, that I may choose the better road!' But the days of his youth had passed away, and his parents were with the departed. He saw wandering lights float over dark marshes, and then disappear. 'Such,' he said, 'were the days of my wasted life!'

He saw a star shoot from heaven, and vanish in darkness athwart the churchyard. 'Behold an emblem of myself!' he exclaimed; and the sharp arrows of unavailing remorse struck him to the heart.

Then he remembered his early companions, who had entered life with him, but who, having trod the paths of virtue and industry, were now happy and honoured on this New Year's night. The clock in the high church-tower struck, and the sound, falling on his ear, recalled the many tokens of the love of his parents for him, their erring son; the lessons they had taught him; the prayers they had offered up in his behalf. Overwhelmed with shame and grief, he dared no longer look towards that heaven where they dwelt. His darkened eyes dropped tears, and, with one despairing effort, he cried aloud, 'Come back, my early days! Come back!'

And his youth *did* return; for all this had been but a dream, visiting his slumbers on New Year's night. He was still young; his errors only were no dream. He thanked God fervently that time was still his own; that he had not yet entered the deep, dark cavern, but that he was free to tread the road leading to the peaceful land where sunny harvests wave.

Ye who still linger on the threshold of life, doubting which path to choose, remember that when years shall be past, and your feet shall stumble on the dark mountain, you will cry bitterly, but cry in vain, 'O youth, return! Oh, give me back my early days!'

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## THE LAST JOURNEY.—Ian Maclaren.

*(Abridged for Recitation.)*

The autumn was passing into winter, when it became apparent to the people of Drumtochty that forty years of hard work—borne without complaint—were beginning to tell upon their beloved doctor. The Glen noticed that the doctor's hair had turned gray, that his manner had lost all its roughness, and that even Flora Campbell's wonderful compound of honey and whisky could not stop his cough. At last, on a bitter December

Sabbath, Maclure's old housekeeper told Drumsheugh, the farmer, that the doctor was not able to rise, and wished to see him in the afternoon. The doctor had weakened sadly, and could hardly lift up his head, but his face lit up at the sight of his visitor, and the big hand, which was now quite refined in its whiteness, came out from the bedclothes with the old warm grip.

'Come in by, man, and sit doun; it 's an' awfu' day tae bring ye sae far, but I kent ye wudna grudge the traivel. A' wesna sure till last nicht, an' then a' felt it wudna' be lang, an' a' took a wearyin' this mornin' tae see ye. We 've been freends sin we were laddies at the auld schule in the firs, an' a' wud like ye tae be wi' me at the end. Ye 'll stay the nicht, Paitrick, for auld lang syne?'

Drumsheugh was much shaken, and the sound of his Christian name, which he had not heard since his mother's death, gave him a shiver as if one had spoken from another world. . . . 'It 's maist awfu' tae hear ye speakin' aboot deein', Weelum; a' canna' bear it. We 'll hae the Muirtown doctor up, an' ye 'll be aboot again in nae time.'

'Na, na, Paitrick, naething can be dune, an' it 's ower late tae send for ony doctor. There 's a knock that canna be mista'en, an' a' heard it last nicht. A 've focht deith for ither fouk mair than forty year, but ma ain time hes come at laist.'

Drumsheugh went over to the fireplace, and for a while did nothing but break up the smouldering peats, the smoke of which powerfully affected his nose and eyes.

'When ye 're ready, Paitrick, there 's twa or three little trokes a' wud like ye tae look aifter, an' a 'll tell ye aboot them as lang as ma head 's clear. . . . A' didna keep buiks, as ye ken, for a' aye hed a guid memory, so naebody 'ill be harried for money aifter ma deith, an' ye 'll ha'e nae accounts tae collect. But the fouk are honest in Drumtochty, and they 'll be offerin' ye siller, an' a 'll gi'e ye my mind aboot it. Gin it be a puir body, tell her tae keep it and get a bit plaidie wi' the money, and she 'll maybe think o' her auld doctor at a time. Gin it be a well-to-do man, tak' half of what he offers, for a Drumtochty man wad scorn tae be mean in sic' circumstances; and if onybody needs a doctor

an' canna pay for him, see he 's no left tae dee when a 'm oot o' the road.'

'Nae fear o' that as lang as a 'm livin', Weelum,' said Drumsheugh.

'If the new doctor be a young laddie and no verra rich, ye micht let him ha'e the buiks an' instruments; it 'll aye be a help. But a' wudna like tae sell Jess, for she 's been a faithfu' servant, an' a freend tae. There 's a note or twa in the drawer a' savit, an' if ye kent ony man that wud gi'e her a bite o' grass an' a sta' in his stable till she followed her maister'——

'Confoond ye, Weelum,' broke out Drumsheugh, 'it 's doonricht cruel o' ye tae speak like this tae me. Whaur wud Jess gang but tae Drumsheugh? She 'll ha'e her run o' heck an' manger sae lang as she lives; the Glen wudna like tae see anither man on Jess, and nae man 'll ever touch the auld mare.'

'Dinna mind me, Paitrick, for a' expectit this; but ye ken we 're no verra gleg wi' oor tongues in Drumtochty, an' dinna tell a' that 's in oor hearts. A 'm gettin' drowsy, an a 'll no be able tae follow ye sune, a' doot; wud ye read a bit tae me afore a' fa' ower? Ye 'll find my mither's auld Bible on the drawer's-heid.'

Drumsheugh put on his spectacles and searched for a comfortable scripture, while the light of the lamp fell on his shaking hands and the doctor's face, where the shadow was now settling.

'Shut the buik and let it open itsel', an' ye 'll get a bit a 've been readin' every nicht the laist month.'

Then Drumsheugh found the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, and read it with a tremulous voice to his friend.

'That micht ha'e been written for me, Paitrick, or ony ither auld sinner that hes feenished his life, an' hes naething tae say for himsel'. . . . It wesna easy for me to get to the kirk, but a' cud ha'e managed it wi' a stretch, an' a' used langidge a' sudna, an' a' micht ha'e been gentler, an' no been so short in the temper. A' see 't a' noo. . . . It 's ower late noo to mend, but ye 'll maybe juist say that a' wes sorry, an' am hopin' that the Almichty 'ill ha'e mercy on me. Cud ye . . . pit up a bit prayer, Paitrick?'

'A' ha'ena the words, Weelum. Wud ye like 's tae send for the minister?'

'It's no the time for that noo, an' a' wud rather ha'e yersel'—juist what's in yir heart, Paitrick: the Almichty 'ill ken the lave Himsel'.'

So Drumsheugh knelt and prayed, with many pauses, a homely prayer for his friend, and for a 'welcome hame aifter a' his wark.'

'Thank ye, Paitrick, and guid-nicht tae ye. Ma ain true freend, gie's yir hand, for a 'll maybe no ken ye again. Noo a 'll say ma mither's prayer and ha'e a sleep; but ye 'll no leave me till a' is ower?'

Then he repeated, as he had done every night of his life, a simple prayer he had learned in his childhood.

He was sleeping quietly, when the wind drove the snow against the window with a sudden 'swish,' and he instantly awoke, so to say, in his sleep. Some one needed him.

'Are ye frae Glen Urtach?' and an unheard voice seemed to have answered him.

'Worse, is she, and sufferin' awfu'? That 's no lichtsome; ye did richt tae come. . . . Gie's a hand wi' the lantern when I 'm saiddling Jess, an' ye needna come on till daylicht: a' ken the road.'

Then he was away in his sleep on some errand of mercy, and struggling through the storm.

'It 's a coorse nicht, Jess, an' heavy traivellin'. Can ye see afore ye, lass? for a 'm clean confused wi' the snaw. . . . Steady, lass, steady; dinna plunge; it 's a drift we 're in, but ye 're no sinkin'. . . . Up noo. . . . There ye are on the road again. . . . Eh, it 's deep the nicht, an' hard on us baith, but there 's a puir woman micht dee if we didna warstle through. . . . That 's it; ye ken fine what I 'm sayin'. . . . Yon 's the hoose black in the snaw. Sandie, man, ye frichtened us; a' didna see ye ahint the dyke. Hoo 's the wife?'

After a while he began again:

'Ye 're fair dune, Jess; an' so am I mysel'. We 're baith gettin' auld, an' dinna tak' sae weel wi' the nicht-wark. . . . We 're ready for oor beds, Jess. . . . Ay, ye aye like a clap at a time; mony a

mile we 've gaed thegither. . . . Yon 's the licht in the kitchen window. Nae wonder ye 're nickerin'; . . . it 's been a stiff journey; a 'm tired, lass; . . . a 'm tired to death' . . . and the voice died into silence.

Soon he resumed speaking. He has forgotten the toil of later years, and has gone back to his boyhood.

'"The Lord 's my Shepherd, I 'll not want,"' he repeated, till he came to the last verse, and then he hesitated. '"Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me."

'"Follow me . . . and . . . and" . . . what 's next? Mither said I wes tae ha'e it ready when she cam'. . . . "A 'll come afore ye gang tae sleep, Wullie, but ye 'ill not get yer kiss if ye canna feenish the psalm." . . . "And . . . in God's house . . . for evermore my" . . . Hoo dis it rin? A' canna mind the next word . . . "my, my"—— It 's ower dark noo tae read it, an' mither 'ill sune be comin'.'

Drumsheugh, in an agony, whispered in his ear, 'My dwelling-place, Weelum.'

'That 's it, that 's it a' noo. Wha said it? "And in God's house for evermore my dwelling-place shall be." . . . A 'm ready noo, an' a 'll get ma kiss when mither comes. A' wish she wud come, for a 'm tired, an' wantin' tae sleep. . . . Yon 's her step . . . an' she 's carryin' a licht in her hand. . . . A' see it through the door. . . . Mither! a' kent ye wudna forget yir laddie, for ye promised tae come, an' a 've feenished my psalm. "And in God's house for evermore my dwelling-place shall be." Gi'e me a kiss, mither, for a 've been waitin' for ye, an' a 'll sune be asleep.'

The gray morning light fell on Drumsheugh still holding his friend's cold hand, and staring at a hearth where the fire had died down into white ashes; but the peace on the doctor's face was of one who rested from his labours.

(From *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*, by kind permission of the author.)

# OLD GRIMES'S MASTERPIECE.

GEORGE WHARTON EDWARDS.

Old Grimes we called him, although that was not his name. The sign on the door of his studio, in that gray old building on Washington Square, was 'N. P. Gummidge'—fancy a painter with a name such as that!—'Portraits.' But in reality he painted religious subjects, such as 'Moses smiting the Rock,' 'Noah contemplating the Ark,' 'Lazarus in the Tomb'—things black with umber and bitumen, and dreadful in drawing.

It was a curious and pathetic figure that presented itself every morning, and mounted the stairs to the upper floor, where were the studios in that portion of the Old University Building which had previously served as the chapel. A figure in a long, well-worn, gray coat, with a pail of water in one hand and a parcel wrapped in yellow grocer's paper in the other—a figure surmounted by a patriarchal head, covered with a silk hat of an ancient model that had evidently been recently wiped with a wet cloth, so disreputably shiny was its lustre.

Beneath its faded brim shone kindly, youthful eyes. His manners were those of the old school—unfailingly polite, and considerate even to the ill-mannered janitor who never lost the opportunity of bullying him. From laughing at him struggling up the steep stairs with his pail of water, we finally got to helping him by turns, and so gained his confidence and friendship.

'You young fellows,' he would say as some one of us assumed his burden at the bottom of the stairs—'you young fellows are away ahead of me. I can't understand your rainbow colours. I can't do it. I am trying to catch up to you, but it's like chasing the will-o'-the-wisp. My things are so dark. Yours are so light and fresh—light with sunlight, and fresh as air. But all the same I don't like them; they are too dazzling. I can't see old Mother Nature in that light—but I am at something now that will astonish you, I think. No! I won't show it until I carry out my idea; then perhaps the world—— But wait—I'll

show you my Lazarus if you like. Come in and see it. I like it. I 've got something in it that is fine.'

Then the pathetic figure with its one shoulder higher than the other would lead us into the studio, thick with dust, littered with his cooking utensils, brushes, pans, bottles, and immense canvases —would bid us be seated with old-fashioned courtesy, apologising for the state of his apartment, and excusing its disorder by dignified imprecations upon a certain mythical person who had not arrived that morning to put his place in order.

It was both ludicrous and pathetic to see him take up his palette and brushes and strike an attitude before his wretched studies, which were both out of drawing and of atrocious colour. 'What do you think of that bit of colour, gentlemen? Don't you think that pretty good—eh? That cheek, now; I find something indescribably beautiful in that—its freshness, if you like—and in the quiver of Mary's lip—quivers, don't it—eh? That's Mary—no, no, not that one—here; that other's the Magdalen. Now, I think that bit of colour a master-stroke—eh? Now, where would you send it—eh? To the S.A.A. or the N.A.D.? You know I have not sent anything in for years, and perhaps they have forgotten me.' So he would stand, wagging his head from side to side, making all the time a smacking noise with his lips, as if he tasted the fancied delicious qualities of the colours he had laid on.

'But my figure of Christ—ha, ha! None of you young fellows have seen that. There it stands behind that drapery. No; no one shall see it until I have completed it. All I want is the face—the face—all else is finished. I want a model for the face. Grand and beautiful it is. But I want the face. When that is finished I 'll show it; 'twill be Gummidge's masterpiece. 'Twill be as famous as—well, never mind—you young fellows cannot understand enthusiasm as I understand it. You are content; and, mind you, I feel for what you are doing—your lightness and brightness, and all that—but I feel also that you want largeness of thought, so we 'll not quarrel. You 'll do your effects, your impressions, and I 'll admire them, and stick to my own methods. Now, I must finish my St Peter for your exhibition; so get along with you all, and God bless you.'

The last day for the collection of pictures for the exhibition would arrive and find Old Grimes in a state of feverish excitement, walking up and down the hall. He would accompany the porters down the long stairs with one hand on the frame of his awful daub of a picture, brushing away lovingly now and then some fancied particle of dust, and again guiding the men around some sharp turn of the stairs for fear that the frame would be injured, and finally following its course with eager eyes as it was placed in the van with others bound for the Academy.

Poor Old Grimes! His pictures always came back to him, refused by the jury. 'Great Scot! Boys, look here—another Grimes!' would be heard at the Academy as the huge black canvas was brought up the steps. And it would be promptly stopped then and there, and sent below with a mark on its back in red chalk.

And so it was year by year. Juries came and went, but Old Grimes carried in his pail of water winter and summer, and painted on.

We never referred to the picture after it was placed in the van. It came back to him in due season, but it passed by closed studio doors—closed out of respect for the feelings of Old Grimes, who for a period thereafter would be silent and melancholy. But he would speedily recover, and begin again upon some new and particularly atrocious scheme of colour and drawing, which was promptly painted over the late unsuccessful Moses or Aaron, or some such attempt.

But it was over the figure of Christ that his enthusiasm never faltered. It was, as he often told us, to be his masterpiece. 'Gummidge's masterpiece,' he called it—this it was understood he had laboured over ever since we first knew him. It stood in the corner of his studio with a dingy white cheese-cloth curtain before it, and whenever we would enter his studio he never failed to drop the curtain to conceal it.

He was always talking of it. When one met him on the stairs in the morning, and helped him up with the inevitable pail of water, he always had some incident to relate, in which the missing face of his picture figured. 'I thought, young friend, that I saw the face this morning, but, alas! when I drew nigh,

there were sordid lines in it. Originally it had been Christlike, I am sure, but life—life—and the passions had changed it—the purity had passed as the scent of the rose. So I am forced to seek again; but I will yet find the face—I am sure I shall yet see it—and then I shall finish my masterpiece. No, you cannot help me, young friend; I must see it for myself. So I may not show it to you until it is finished. Then you shall see it—all the world shall see Gummidge's masterpiece.'

Then he would begin to draw aimless lines on the canvas before him with a piece of charcoal, and fidget about to show that he desired to be alone.

Poor old man! It was a pitiful sight—the thin, bony hand holding the charcoal trembling in the strong north light from the skylight above—a hand transparent and yellow, with fine, long, tapering fingers; and the eager, sallow face, with its straggling gray hair and beard falling over the threadbare velvet coat, with its careless blotches of dry paint upon the left arm.

One day, upon comparing notes, we found that old Grimes had not been seen for several days; and while we were talking, Middletone, at once the most talented and the idlest fellow I ever knew, came into the studio, and with a show of feeling, of which no one had hitherto suspected him, burst forth:

'Look here—they say that Old Grimes is to be turned out because he hasn't paid his rent for a year. Now I ain't going to let it be done. If we fellows can't settle it some way with the agent, so that he needn't be bothered in his room, I 'm going to let him have mine. I never do anything any way, so it won't matter. The old man is all broken up—sick in bed; I saw him this morning. I 've sent for a doctor for him. I don't believe he 's had enough to eat for months past.'

We went up in a body to Old Grimes's studio. There, on a small iron bed, beside the huge curtained canvas of the masterpiece, which none of us had ever seen, lay the thin figure of the old man—the face drawn and the eyes closed. His fingers were picking, picking unceasingly at the thin blanket that covered him.

Middletone took one of the thin, yellow, parchment-like hands in his as the doctor entered hurriedly, and, with a nod

to us, seated himself beside the bed, methodically setting down his hat and case of medicine beside him, and wiping his eye-glasses.

'So,' he said, turning up the lids of the sunken eyes and peering into them. 'Bring that lamp a little nearer—thanks.'

An interval of silence in the room as the doctor bared the shrunken breast and applied his ear. 'You had best send for his friends,' said he, replacing the bed-clothing and rising to his feet. 'The old man will not last through the night. There is total collapse, and I doubt if he will regain consciousness. Insufficient nourishment and old age. Eh! no relatives or friends outside the building?' he said, turning and looking at the gaunt figure stretched beside him. 'Well, there's nothing more that I can do, so I'll wish you good-night, gentlemen. My fee? Oh, that's all right. The old man has nothing, you say. I tried to paint once myself. You are good fellows, you painters; good-night to you all.'

We sat by Old Grimes's bed by turns that night. Toward morning he stirred restlessly, and I moistened his lips with water.

His lips moved, but at first I heard no sound.

'The face of Christ,' he mumbled. 'The face! They cannot refuse it once I find it. It will be a masterpiece. So strong, so mild!' he repeated, feebly waving his hand, and motioning as though he was using the charcoal.

A fine sleet dashed against the large skylight. The noise of a passing carriage in the street below aroused the old man. He slowly opened his eyes, and, gazing about him, they finally rested on my face.

'So,' he said after glancing at me for a moment, 'this is the end, is it? Well, 'tis time.' The clock feebly ticking in the corner and the sleet rattling on the skylight were the only sounds that followed. I was dozing; perhaps I slept—I am not sure.

Suddenly I opened my eyes.

The bed was empty. I sprang to my feet with an exclamation. There, among the huge canvases, before the curtain which hid the masterpiece, stood the tottering figure of Old Grimes.

I rushed to his side.

'Charcoal,' he said feebly. 'Give me a piece of charcoal. I—I 've almost seen the face. I think—I can—draw it—in all its purity.'

I gently persuaded him to return to bed. The lamp, flickering feebly, illuminated the vast height of the studio. Here and there a carved corbel thrust itself forward among the dark canvases that had accumulated in all the long years that Old Grimes had sought his ideal.

Above, the Gothic arches met, and in the dark blue spaces between them faint gold stars seemed to twinkle; for this had originally been part of the chapel of the Old University. The deep blue of the painted spaces seemed limitless in the dim light of the lamp. Now and then the squeak of a foraging mouse sounded among the canvases. Old Grimes had been breathing heavily; now he raised himself on the bed, and, lifting his arms, cried out, 'I saw it! It will be my masterpiece! Give me—my—palette—my brushes—some one.'

I then propped him up in the bed with pillows, placed his palette in the hollow of his left arm, and gave him his brushes as Middletone entered the studio. 'Call the fellows,' I said; 'the old man's sands are almost run out.'

In a few moments he came back with our coterie, quiet and sad in the presence of the angel of death. Not a word was spoken, but their awe-stricken faces showed their hearts had been touched.

We grouped ourselves about the bed, watching the feeble motions of the dying painter's hand describing lines in the air before him.

Then the hand holding the brush fell upon the blanket. He raised his head; his eyes opened with an upward gaze into the dim, blue, starry space above us; a smile of joy illumined the thin lips.

'I see it—there—gentlemen—there—the face of Christ. There—at last—at last I 've found the face of Christ!'

. . . . . .

And so Old Grimes's work was done.

# THE DOOM OF CLAUDIUS AND CYNTHIA.

MAURICE THOMPSON.

(*Abridged for Recitation.*)

It was in the mid-splendour of the reign of the Emperor Commodus. The emperor was quite easily flattered, and more easily insulted. Especially desirous of being accounted the best swordsman and the most fearless gladiator in Rome, he still better enjoyed the reputation of being the incomparable archer. With a view to this he had assiduously trained himself so as to be able, in various public places, to give startling exhibitions of his skill with the bow and arrows. Often in the Circus he had shot off an ostrich's head while the bird was running at full speed across the arena in view of the astonished multitudes. No archer had ever been able to compete with him. This success had rendered him a monomaniac on the subject of archery, affecting him so deeply, indeed, that he cared more for his fame as a consummate bowman than for the dignity and honour of his name and responsibility as Emperor of Rome. This being true, it can well be understood how Claudius, by publicly boasting that he was a better archer than Commodus, had brought upon himself the calamity of a public execution. But not even Nero would have thought of bringing the girl to death for the fault of her lover. Commodus was the master tyrant and fiend. Claudius and his bride had been arrested together at their nuptial feast, and dragged to separate dungeons to await the emperor's will.

The rumour was abroad in Rome that on a certain night a most startling scene would be enacted in the Circus. That the sight would be blood-curdling in the last degree was taken by every one for granted. Emissaries of Commodus had industriously sown about the streets hints too vague to take definite form, calculated to arouse great interest. The result was that on the night in question the vast building was crowded at an early hour. All the seats were filled with people eager to witness some harrowing scene of death. Commodus himself, surrounded by a

great number of his favourites, sat on a high, richly cushioned throne prepared for him about midway one side of the vast enclosure. All was still, as if the multitude were breathless with expectancy. Presently, out from one of the openings a young man and a young woman—a mere girl—their hands bound behind them, were led forth upon the sand of the arena and forced to walk around the entire circumference of the place.

The youth was tall and nobly beautiful, a very Hercules in form, an Apollo in grace and charm of movement. His hair was blue-black and crisp, and a young, soft beard curled over his cheek and lips. The girl was *petite* and lovely beyond compare. Her hair was pure gold, falling to her feet and trailing behind her as she walked. His eyes were dark and proud, hers gray and deep as those of a goddess. Both were nude, excepting a short kirtle reaching to near the knee. They seemed to move half-unconscious of their surroundings, all-bewildered and dazzled by the situation.

At length the giant circuit was completed, and the two were left standing on the sand, distant about one hundred and twenty feet from the emperor, who now arose and in a loud voice said :

'Behold the condemned Claudius, and Cynthia, whom he lately took for his wife. They are condemned to death for the great folly of Claudius, that the Roman people may know that Commodus reigns supreme. The crime for which they are to die is a great one. Claudius has publicly proclaimed that he is a better archer than I, Commodus, am. I am the emperor and the incomparable archer of Rome. Whoever disputes it dies, and his wife dies with him. It is decreed.'

This strange speech was repeated, sentence after sentence, by criers placed at intervals around the wall, so that every person in that vast crowd heard every word. No one, however, was astonished at the infamous deed in contemplation. Too often had Commodus, for the most trivial offence, or for no offence at all, hurried Roman citizens to bloody death. And, indeed, why should a multitude schooled to take keen delight in gladiatorial combats ever shudder at anything?

But it was enough to touch the heart of even a Roman to see the tender innocence of that fair girl's face as she turned it up in

speechless, tearless, appealing grief and anguish to her husband's. Her pure bosom heaved and quivered with the awful terror suddenly generated within. The youth, erect and powerful, set his thin lips firmly and kept his eyes looking straight out before him. Among the onlookers many knew him as a trained athlete, and especially as an almost unerring archer. They knew him, too, as a brave soldier, a true friend, an honourable citizen. Little time remained for such reflections as naturally might have arisen, for immediately a large cage, containing two fiery-eyed and famished tigers, was brought into the Circus and placed before the victims. The hungry beasts were excited to madness by the smell of fresh blood smeared on the bars of the cage for that purpose. They growled and howled, lapping their fiery tongues and plunging against the door.

A murmur ran all round that vast ellipse—a murmur of remonstrance and disgust; for now every one saw that the spectacle was to be a foul murder without even the show of a struggle. The alert eyes of Commodus were bent upon the crouching beasts. At the same time he noted well the restlessness and disappointment of the people. He understood his subjects, and knew how to excite them. He was preparing to do a deed by which he hoped to elicit great applause. His triumph came like a thunderbolt, and in a twinkling all was changed.

The limbs of the poor girl had begun to give way under her, and she was slowly sinking to the ground. This seemed greatly to affect the man, who, without lowering his fixed eyes, tried to support her with his body. Despite his efforts she slid down and lay in a helpless heap at his feet. The lines on his manly face deepened, and a slight ashy pallor flickered on brow and eyelids. But he did not tremble. He stood like a statue of Hercules.

Then a sound came from the cage which no words can ever describe—the hungry howl, the clashing teeth, the hissing breath of the tigers, along with a sharp clang of the iron bars spurned by their rushing feet. The Circus fairly shook with the plunge of Death toward its victims.

Suddenly in this last moment the maiden, by a great effort, writhed to her feet and covered the youth's body with her own. Such love! It should have sweetened death for that young man.

How white his face grows! How his eyes flame, immovably fixed upon the coming demons! Those who have often turned up their thumbs in this place for men to die now hold their breath in utter disgust and sympathy.

Look for a brief time upon the picture: fifty thousand faces or more thrust forward gazing—the helpless couple, lost to everything but the black horrors of death, quivering from foot to crown. Note the spotless beauty and the unselfish love of the girl. Mark well the stern power of the young man's face. Think of the marriage vows just taken, of the golden bowl of bliss a moment ago at their young lips. Think how sweet life must be to them on the threshold of their honeymoon. And now, oh! now, look at the bounding, flaming-eyed tigers! See how one leads the other in the awful race to the feast! The girl is nearer than the man. She will feel the claws and fangs first. How wide those red, frothy mouths gape! How the red tongues loll! The sand flies up in a cloud from the armed feet of the leaping brutes.

There came from the place where Commodus stood a clear, musical note, such as might have come from the gravest cord of a lyre if powerfully stricken, closely followed by a keen, far-reaching hiss, like the whisper of fate, ending in a heavy blow. The multitude caught breath and stared. The foremost tiger, while yet in mid-air, curled itself up with a gurgling cry of utter pain, and with the blood gushing from its eyes, ears, and mouth, fell heavily down, dying. Again the sweet, insinuating twang, the hiss, and the stroke. The second beast fell dead or dying upon the first. This explained all. The emperor had demonstrated his right to be called the Royal Bowman of the World.

Had the tyrant been content to rest here all would have been well. While yet the beasts were faintly struggling with death, he gave orders for a shifting of the scene. He was insatiable.

For the first time during the ordeal the youth's eyes moved. The girl, whose back was turned toward the beasts, was still waiting for the crushing horror of their assault.

A soldier, as directed, now approached the twain, and seizing an arm of each, led them some paces farther away from the emperor, where he stationed them facing each other, and with

their sides to Commodus, who was preparing to shoot again. Before drawing his bow, however, he cried aloud:

'Behold! Commodus will pierce the centre of the ear of each!'

As before, the cry was caught up by other voices and echoed around the vast place.

The lovers were gazing into each other's eyes, still as statues, as if frozen by the cold fascination of death. The excitement of the spectators reached the last degree when the great horn bow was again raised.

And now the end was near. All around that vast space, tier above tier, the pallid faces of the spectators rose to a dizzy height, seeming by their ghastly glow to blend a strange light with the fierce glare of the flambeaux, so intense was their excitement. Every soul in that multitude was for the time suspended above the abysm of destruction, realising the feebleness of Life, the potency of Death.

Commodus drew his bow with tremendous power, fetching the cord back to his breast, where for a moment it was held without the faintest quiver of a muscle. His eyes were fixed, and cold as steel. The polished broad head of the arrow shone like a diamond. One would have thought that the breathing of a breath could have been heard across the Circus.

While yet the pink flush burned on the delicate ear of the girl, and while the hush of the Circus deepened infinitely, out rang the low note of the great weapon's recoil. The arrow fairly shrieked through the air, so swift was its flight.

What words can ever suggest an idea of the torture crowded into that point of time betwixt the ringing of the bow-cord and the striking of the arrow?

The youth, particularly, was shaken with a sudden wild ecstasy of horror. As when a whirlwind, leaping from a balmy summer calm, stirs a sleeping pool into a white-foamed spiral flood, so Death had at last torn up the fountain of his soul. It was more than death when the arrow had done its work with her.

The girl, thrilled with ineffable pain, flung up her white arms above her head, the rent thongs flying away in the paroxysm of her final struggle. Hers was a slight body, and the arrow, not

perceptibly impeded by the mark, struck in the sand beyond, and, glancing thence, whirled far away and rang on the bricks of the *spina.* Something like a divine smile flashed across her face along with a startling pallor.

Again the bow-string rang, and the arrow leaped away to its thrilling work. What a surge the youth made! It was as if Death had charged him with omnipotence for the second. The cord leaped from his wrists—he clasped the falling girl in his embrace. All eyes saw the arrow hurtling along the sand, after its mission was done. A suppressed moan from a multitude of lips filled the calm air of the Circus.

Locked for one brief moment in each other's arms, the quivering victims wavered on their feet, then sank down upon the ground. Commodus stood like Fate, leaning forward to note the perfectness of his execution. His eyes blazed with the eager, heartless fire of triumph.

Now here is the *dénouement.* Even the most exacting modern critic could find nothing further to desire in the catastrophe of a tragedy. The fated lovers lay in awful agony, locked in the strong embrace of a deathless passion. No hand dared separate them; no lip dared whisper them a last farewell. The place might have been a vast tomb, for all the sign of life it contained. The circles of countless faces were like those of the dead.

The two tigers lay in their blood where they had fallen, each with a broad-headed arrow through the spinal cord, at the point of its juncture with the brain. The emperor's aim had been absolutely accurate. Instant paralysis and quick death had followed his shots.

But the crowning event of the occasion was revealed at the last.

Pale and wild-eyed, their faces pinched and shrivelled, the youth and the maid started, with painful totterings and weak clutchings at the air, and writhed to their feet, where they stood staring at each other in a way to chill the blood of any observer. Then, as if attracted by some irresistible fascination, they turned their mute, sunken faces toward Commodus. What a look! Why did it not freeze him dead where he stood?

'Lead them out and set them free!' cried the emperor in a

loud, heartless voice. 'Lead them out, and tell it everywhere that Commodus is the Incomparable Bowman!'

And then, when all at once it was discovered that he had not hurt the lovers, but had merely cut in two with his arrows the cords that bound their wrists, a great stir began, and out from a myriad overjoyed and admiring hearts leaped a storm of thanks, while with clash and bray of musical instruments, and with voices like the voices of winds and seas, and with a clapping of hands like the rending roar of tempests, the vast audience arose as one person and applauded the emperor!

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## ONLY SISTER.—Saxton Everts.

The mother died peacefully, knowing that she left the little ones in good and careful hands, for, though but a girl herself, 'Sister' was as trustworthy as any woman twice her age, and she more than took the place of the gentle, ailing mother. She tried to be wise and gentle with the turbulent children; and the hours filled with pleasure and bright dreams of lovers by other girls were only too short for this one to keep the small garments repaired and the house neat for father.

So, gradually, the year slipped by, and Sister's fresh young cheeks showed signs of care, and the faithful heart was oppressed by many growing responsibilities. But no one noticed that youth and beauty were fleeing from her with the carrying of the burden, and to the younger members of the family she was 'only Sister,' the one whose place must never be vacant, who must never be too tired to mend this or do that. The father, too, grew accustomed to being looked after by his eldest child, and though always kind, he failed to understand that the shoulders were too young for the load they carried; and so time went on.

She was not unhappy, you understand. No; her life was too busy for that, and those dependent on her filled her heart too completely for it to hunger for others; and, after all, it is duty well done that keeps the sky blue above us.

By and by the children grew up and began to make homes for

themselves. The boys went away, feeling like birds uncaged, and, with wives and babies to be all in all to them, forgot Sister. The girls went with many tears and much clinging to the work-bowed figure; but the new loves weaned them too from home memories. At last the old father and Sister were left alone; but he too was going fast to another home, and it was still Sister's hands that made smooth the way. It was on her breast that the gray head lay as he murmured, 'You have been a good child, daughter,' before he died, and her tears that fell first on the quiet face.

After the funeral the brothers and sisters seemed to take it for granted that the old maid sister would remain in the old house, and went contentedly back to their cheerful, well-filled homes.

Now, for the first time, Sister realised what loneliness was, and felt the void that all feel whose work is finished before death gives the well-earned rest. To occupy herself she attended to her simple wants unaided, and on the days when some of them remembered her was very, very happy. But she drooped and pined for the children, and after a while she fell ill. Not very ill, not enough to alarm them, but only weak and ailing, as her mother had been long ago. At the close of one of the early autumn days she found herself unable to eat the simple lunch before her, so crept away early to her lonely bed. Lying awake, too sad to sleep, there somehow came to her the memory of many a wakeful night beside a childish bed. Then it was that the floodgates were swept away and the patient heart broke. She had loved them so, tended them so well! Never had she slept so soundly that a fretful voice failed to rouse her, and now not one was near to hear her call a last good-bye. They had forgotten her.

They found her next morning lying dead beside the old trundle-bed in the deserted nursery. One yearning arm was thrown over a little pillow where no head rested then, and they wept, understanding at last through the loving attitude what her life had been.

## DEATH OF DORA.—Charles Dickens.

It is evening; and I sit in the same chair, by the same bed, with the same face turned towards me. We have been silent, and there is a smile upon her face. I have ceased to carry my light burden up and down stairs now. She lies here all the day.

'Doady!'

'My dear Dora!'

'You won't think what I am going to say unreasonable, after what you told me, such a little while ago, of Mr Wickfield's not being well? I want to see Agnes. Very much I want to see her.'

'I will write to her, my dear.'

'Will you?'

'Directly.'

'What a good, kind boy! Doady, take me on your arm. Indeed, my dear, it's not a whim. It's not a foolish fancy. I want, very much indeed, to see her!'

'I am certain of it. I have only to tell her so, and she is sure to come.'

'You are very lonely when you go downstairs, now?' Dora whispers, with her arm about my neck.

'How can I be otherwise, my own love, when I see your empty chair?'

'My empty chair!' She clings to me for a little while in silence. 'And you really miss me, Doady?' looking up and brightly smiling. 'Even poor, giddy, stupid me?'

'My heart, who is there upon earth that I could miss so much?'

'Oh husband! I am so glad, yet so sorry!' creeping closer to me, and folding me in both her arms. She laughs and sobs, and then is quiet, and quite happy.

'Quite!' she says. 'Only give Agnes my dear love, and tell her that I want very, very much to see her; and I have nothing left to wish for.'

'Except to get well again, Dora.'

'Ah, Doady! Sometimes I think—you know I always was a silly little thing!—that that will never be!'

'Don't say so, Dora! Dearest love, don't think so!'

'I won't, if I can help it, Doady. But I am very happy; though my dear boy is so lonely by himself, before his child-wife's empty chair!'

It is night; and I am with her still. Agnes has arrived; has been among us for a whole day and an evening. She, my aunt, and I have sat with Dora since the morning, altogether. We have not talked much, but Dora has been perfectly contented and cheerful. We are now alone.

Do I know now that my child-wife will soon leave me? They have told me so; they have told me nothing new to my thoughts; but I am far from sure that I have taken that truth to heart. I cannot master it. I have withdrawn by myself, many times to-day, to weep. I have remembered who wept for a parting between the living and the dead. I have bethought me of all that gracious and compassionate history. I have tried to resign myself, and to console myself; and that, I hope, I may have done imperfectly; but what I cannot firmly settle in my mind is, that the end will absolutely come. I hold her hand in mine; I hold her heart in mine; I see her love for me, alive in all its strength. I cannot shut out a pale, lingering shadow of belief that she will be spared.

'I am going to speak to you, Doady. I am going to say something I have often thought of saying, lately. You won't mind?' with a gentle look.

'Mind, my darling?'

'Because I don't know what you will think, or what you may have thought sometimes. Perhaps you have often thought the same. Doady, dear, I am afraid I was too young.'

I lay my face upon the pillow by her, and she looks into my eyes, and speaks very softly. Gradually, as she goes on, I feel, with a stricken heart, that she is speaking of herself as past.

'I am afraid, dear, I was too young. I don't mean in years only, but in experience, and thoughts, and everything. I was

such a silly little creature! I am afraid it would have been better if we had only loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it. I have begun to think I was not fit to be a wife.'

I try to stay my tears, and to reply, 'Oh, Dora love, as fit as I to be a husband!'

'I don't know,' with the old shake of her curls. 'Perhaps! But if I had been more fit to be married I might have made you more so, too. Besides, you are very clever, and I never was.'

'We have been very happy, my sweet Dora.'

'I was very happy—very. But as years went on my dear boy would have wearied of his child-wife. She would have been less and less a companion for him. He would have been more and more sensible of what was wanting in his home. She wouldn't have improved. It is better as it is.'

'Oh Dora, dearest, dearest, do not speak to me so! Every word seems a reproach!'

'No, not a syllable!' she answers, kissing me. 'Oh, my dear! you never deserved it, and I loved you far too well to say a reproachful word to you in earnest—it was all the merit I had, except being pretty—or you thought me so. Is it lonely downstairs, Doady?'

'Very! Very!'

'Don't cry! Is my chair there?'

'In its old place.'

'Oh, how my poor boy cries! Hush, hush! Now, make me one promise. I want to speak to Agnes. When you go downstairs tell Agnes so and send her up to me; and while I speak to her let no one come—not even aunt. I want to speak to Agnes by herself. I want to speak to Agnes quite alone.'

I promise that she shall immediately; but I cannot leave her, for my grief.

'I said that it was better as it is!' she whispers as she holds me in her arms. 'Oh Doady! after more years, you never could have loved your child-wife better than you do; and after more years, she would so have tried and disappointed you that you

might not have been able to love her half so well! I know I was too young and foolish. It is much better as it is!'

Agnes is downstairs when I go into the parlour, and I give her the message. She disappears, leaving me alone with Jip.

His Chinese house is by the fire; and he lies within it, on his bed of flannel, querulously trying to sleep. The bright moon is high and clear. As I look out on the night my tears fall fast, and my undisciplined heart is chastened heavily—heavily.

I sit down by the fire, thinking with a blind remorse of all those secret feelings I have nourished since my marriage. I think of every little trifle between me and Dora, and feel the truth that trifles make the sum of life. Ever rising from the sea of my remembrance is the image of the dear child as I knew her first, graced by my young love, and by her own, with every fascination wherein such love is rich. Would it, indeed, have been better if we had loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it? Undisciplined heart, reply!

How the time wears I know not, until I am recalled by my child-wife's old companion. More restless than he was, he crawls out of his house, and looks at me, and wanders to the door, and whines to go upstairs.

'Not to-night, Jip! Not to-night!'

He comes very slowly back to me, licks my hand, and lifts his dim eyes to my face.

'Oh Jip! It may be never again!'

He lies down at my feet, stretches himself out as if to sleep, and, with a plaintive cry, is dead.

'Oh Agnes! Look—look here!'

That face, so full of pity and of grief, that rain of tears, that awful mute appeal to me, that solemn hand upraised towards heaven!

'Agnes!'—It is over. Darkness comes before my eyes, and for a time all things are blotted out of my remembrance.

## MR THOMPSON'S PRODIGAL.—Bret Harte.

(*Abridged for Recitation.*)

We all knew that Mr Thompson was looking for his son, and a pretty bad one at that. Perhaps to superficial criticism Mr Thompson's nature was not picturesque nor lovable. His history, as imparted at dinner one day by himself, was practical even in its singularity. After a hard and wilful youth and maturity, in which he had buried a broken-spirited wife and driven his son to sea, he suddenly experienced religion. 'I got it in New Orleans in '59,' said Mr Thompson, with the general suggestion of referring to an epidemic. 'Enter ye the narrer gate. Parse me the beans.' Perhaps this practical quality upheld him in his apparently hopeless search. He had no clue to the whereabouts of his runaway son; indeed, scarcely a proof of his present existence. From his indifferent recollection of the boy of twelve he now expected to identify the man of twenty-five.

It would seem that he was successful. It was after Mr Thompson had given up searching for his son among the living, and had taken to the examination of cemeteries and a careful inspection of the 'cold *hic jacets* of the dead.' At this time he was a frequent visitor of 'Lone Mountain'—a dreary hill-top, bleak enough in its original isolation, and bleaker for the white-faced marbles by which San Francisco anchored her departed citizens, and kept them down in a shifting sand that refused to cover them, and against a fierce and persistent wind that strove to blow them utterly away. Against this wind the old man opposed a will quite as persistent—a grizzled, hard face, and a tall, crape-bound hat drawn tightly over his eyes—and so spent days in reading the mortuary inscriptions audibly to himself.

On one occasion Mr Thompson stayed later than usual. As he turned his face toward the city, lights were beginning to twinkle ahead, and a fierce wind, made visible by fog, drove him forward, or, lying in wait, charged him angrily from the corners of deserted suburban streets. It was on one of these corners that something else, quite as indistinct and malevolent, leaped upon him

with an oath, a presented pistol, and a demand for money. But it was met by a will of iron and a grip of steel. The assailant and assailed rolled together on the ground. But the next moment the old man was erect, one hand grasping the captured pistol, the other clutching at arm's-length the throat of a figure, surly, youthful, and savage.

'Young man,' said Mr Thompson, setting his thin lips together, 'what might be your name?'

'Thompson!'

The old man's hand slid from the throat to the arm of his prisoner, without relaxing its firmness.

'Char-les Thompson, come with me,' he said presently, and marched his captive to the hotel. What took place there has not transpired, but it was known the next morning that Mr Thompson had found his son.

It is proper to add to the above improbable story that there was nothing in the young man's appearance or manners to justify it. Grave, reticent, and handsome, devoted to his newly-found parent, he assumed the emoluments and responsibilities of his new condition with a certain serious ease that more nearly approached that which San Francisco society lacked, and—rejected. Some chose to despise this quality as a tendency to 'psalm-singing;' others saw in it the inherited qualities of the parent, and were ready to prophesy for the son the same hard old age. But all agreed that it was not inconsistent with the habits of money-getting, for which father and son were respected.

And yet the old man did not seem to be happy. Perhaps it was that the consummation of his wishes left him without a practical mission; perhaps—and it is the more probable—he had little love for the son he had regained. The obedience he exacted was freely given; the reform he had set his heart upon was complete; and yet, somehow, it did not seem to please him. In reclaiming his son he had fulfilled all the requirements that his religious duty required of him, and yet the act seemed to lack sanctification. In this perplexity he read again the parable of the Prodigal Son—which he had long ago adopted for his guidance—and found that he had omitted the final feast of reconciliation. This seemed to offer the proper quality of ceremoniousness in

the sacrament between himself and his son; and so, a year after the appearance of Charles, he set about giving him a party. 'Invite everybody, Char-les,' he said dryly—'everybody who knows that I brought you out of the wine-husks of iniquity; and bid them eat, drink, and be merry.'

Perhaps the old man had another reason, not yet clearly analysed. The fine house he had built on the sand-hills sometimes seemed lonely and bare. He often found himself trying to reconstruct, from the grave features of Charles, the little boy whom he but dimly remembered in the past, and of whom lately he had been thinking a great deal. He believed this to be a sign of impending old age and childishness; but coming one day, in his formal drawing-room, upon a child of one of the servants, who had strayed therein, he would have taken him in his arms, but the child fled from before his grizzled face. So that it seemed eminently proper to invite a number of people to his house, and, from the array of San Francisco maidenhood, to select a daughter-in-law. And then there would be a child—a boy, whom he could 'rare up' from the beginning, and—love—as he did not love Charles.

We were all at the party. The Smiths, Joneses, Browns, and Robinsons also came, in that fine flow of animal spirits, unchecked by any respect for the entertainer, which most of us are apt to find so fascinating. The proceedings would have been somewhat riotous but for the social position of the actors. In fact, Mr Bracey Tibbets, having naturally a fine appreciation of a humorous situation, but further impelled by the bright eyes of the Jones girls, conducted himself so remarkably as to attract the serious regard of Mr Charles Thompson, who approached him, saying quietly, 'You look ill, Mr Tibbets; let me conduct you to your carriage. Resist, you hound! and I 'll throw you through that window. This way, please; the room is close and distressing.' It is hardly necessary to say that but a part of this speech was audible to the company, and that the rest was not divulged t Mr Tibbets, who afterwards regretted the sudden illness whic kept him from witnessing a certain amusing incident, which tl fastest Miss Jones characterised as the 'richest part of the blo out,' and which I hasten to record.

It was at supper. It was evident that Mr Thompson had overlooked much lawlessness in the conduct of the younger people in his abstract contemplation of some impending event. When the cloth was removed he rose to his feet, and grimly tapped upon the table. A titter that broke out among the Jones girls became epidemic on one side of the board. Charles Thompson, from the foot of the table, looked up in tender perplexity. 'He 's going to sing a Doxology,' 'He 's going to pray,' 'Silence for a speech,' ran round the room.

'It 's one year to-day, Christian brothers and sisters,' said Mr Thompson, with grim deliberation—'one year to-day since my son came home from eating of wine-husks.' (The tittering suddenly ceased.) 'Look at him now. Char-les Thompson, stand up.' (Charles Thompson stood up.) 'One year ago to-day—and look at him now.'

He was certainly a handsome prodigal, standing there in his cheerful evening-dress—a repentant prodigal, with sad, obedient eyes turned upon the harsh and unsympathetic glance of his father. The youngest Miss Smith, from the pure depths of her foolish little heart, moved unconsciously toward him.

'It 's fifteen years ago since he left my house,' said Mr Thompson, 'a rovier and a prodigal. I was myself a man of sin, O Christian friends—a man of wrath and bitterness; and when I found the error of my ways and the preciousness of grace I came to give it to my son. By sea and land I sought him far, and fainted not. I did not wait for him to come to me, which the same I might have done, but I sought him out among his husks, and'—— (the rest of the sentence was lost in the rustling withdrawal of the ladies). 'Works, Christian friends, is my motto. By their works shall ye know them, and there is mine.'

The particular and accepted work to which Mr Thompson was alluding had turned quite pale, and was looking fixedly toward an open door leading to the veranda, lately filled by gaping servants, and now the scene of some vague tumult. As the noise continued, a man, shabbily dressed, and evidently in liquor, broke through the opposing guardians and staggered into the room. The transition from the fog and darkness without to the glare and heat within evidently dazzled and stupefied him. He removed

his battered hat and passed it once or twice before his eyes as he steadied himself, but unsuccessfully, by the back of a chair. Suddenly his wandering glance fell upon the pale face of Charles Thompson, and with a gleam of child-like recognition and a weak, falsetto laugh, he darted forward, caught at the table, upset the glasses, and literally fell upon the prodigal's breast.

'Sha'ly! yo' ol' scoun'rel, hoo rar ye?'

'Hush!—sit down!—hush!' said Charles Thompson, hurriedly endeavouring to extricate himself from the embrace of his unexpected guest.

'Look at 'm!' continued the stranger, unheeding the admonition, but suddenly holding the unfortunate Charles at arm's-length, in loving and undisguised admiration of his festive appearance. 'Look at 'm! Ain't he nasty? Sha'ls, I 'm prow' of yer!'

'Leave the house!' said Mr Thompson, rising, with a dangerous look in his cold, gray eye. 'Char-les, how dare you?'

'Simmer down, ol' man! Sha'ls, who 's th' ol' bloat? Eh?'

'Hush, man; here, take this!' With nervous hands Charles Thompson filled a glass with liquor. 'Drink it and go—until to-morrow—any time, but—leave us!—go now!' But even then, ere the miserable wretch could drink, the old man, pale with passion, was upon him. Half-carrying him in his powerful arms, half-dragging him through the circling crowd of frightened guests, he had reached the door, swung open by the waiting servants, when Charles Thompson started from a seeming stupor, crying:

'Stop!'

The old man stopped. Through the open door the fog and wind drove chilly. 'What does this mean?' he asked, turning a baleful face on Charles.

'Nothing—but stop—for God's sake! Wait till to-morrow, but not to-night. Do not, I implore you—do this thing.'

There was something in the tone of the young man's voice, something, perhaps, in the contact of the struggling wretch he held in his powerful arms; but a dim, indefinite fear took possession of the old man's heart. 'Who,' he whispered hoarsely, 'is this man?'

Charles did not answer.

'Stand back there, all of you,' thundered Mr Thompson to the

crowding guests around him. 'Char-les—come here! I command you—I—I—I—beg you—tell me *who* is this man?'

Only two persons heard the answer that came faintly from the lips of Charles Thompson:

'YOUR SON.'

When day broke over the bleak sand-hills the guests had departed from Mr Thompson's banquet-halls. The lights still burned dimly and coldly in the deserted rooms—deserted by all but three figures, that huddled together in the chill drawing-room, as if for warmth. One lay in drunken slumber on a couch; at his feet sat he who had been known as Charles Thompson; and beside them, haggard and shrunken to half his size, bowed the figure of Mr Thompson, his gray eye fixed, his elbows upon his knees, and his hands clasped over his ears, as if to shut out the sad, entreating voice that seemed to fill the room.

'God knows I did not set about to wilfully deceive. The name I gave that night was the first that came into my thought—the name of one whom I thought dead—the dissolute companion of my shame. And when you questioned further, I used the knowledge that I gained from him to touch your heart to set me free; only, I swear, for that! But when you told me who you were, and I first saw the opening of another life before me—then—then—— O sir, if I was hungry, homeless, and reckless when I would have robbed you of your gold, I was heart-sick, helpless, and desperate when I would have robbed you of your love!'

The old man stirred not. From his luxurious couch the newly-found prodigal snored peacefully.

'I had no father I could claim. I never knew a home but this. I was tempted. I have been happy—very happy.'

He rose and stood before the old man.

'Do not fear that I shall come between your son and his inheritance. To-day I leave this place, never to return. The world is large, sir, and, thanks to your kindness, I now see the way by which an honest livelihood is gained. Good-bye. You will not take my hand? Well, well. Good-bye.'

He turned to go. But when he had reached the door he

suddenly came back, and, raising with both hands the grizzled head, he kissed it once and twice.

'Char-les.'

There was no reply.

'Char-les!'

The old man rose with a frightened air, and tottered feebly to the door. It was open. There came to him the awakened tumult of a great city, in which the prodigal's footsteps were lost for ever.

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## THE BURST BUBBLE.—J. B. GOUGH.

What has the man been doing who all his lifetime has been the slave to evil habit? He has spent his life and his fortune—sold his birthright! And what has he obtained? Nothing but the mere excitement of chasing after that which is not reality.

It is as if a man should start in a chase after a bubble, attracted by its bright and gorgeous hues.

It leads him, at first, through vineyards, under trellised vines, with grapes hanging in all their purpled glory; it leads him by sparkling fountains, with delicious music and the singing of birds; it leads him through orchards hanging thick with golden fruit. He laughs and dances! It is a merry chase!

By and by that excitement becomes intense—that intensity becomes a passion—that passion a disease!

Now his eye is fixed upon the bubble with fretful earnestness; now he leaps with desperation and disappointment.

Now it leads him away from all that is bright and beautiful—from all the tender, clustering, hallowed associations of bygone days—up the steep, hot sides of a fearful volcano!

Now there is pain and anguish in the chase. He leaps and falls, and rises bruised, scorched, and blistered; but the excitement, the power of habit, has the mastery over him; he forgets all that is past, and in his terrible chase he leaps again. It is gone!

He curses, and bites his lips in agony, and shrieks almost the

wild shriek of despair. Yet still he pursues the phantom that lures him on to destruction, and leaps again. It is gone!

Knee-deep in the hot ashes, he staggers up with limbs torn and bruised, the last semblance of humanity scorched out of him. Still he struggles on, and leaps again—it is gone! Again—it is gone!

Yet there is his prize. Glittering mockingly before him, there it is—he will have it!

The hot breath of the volcano is on his brow—its flame gleams in his eyes—his foot is on the crater's edge! Yet there it is—that horrible fascination—floating over him—he will have it!

With one last desperate effort, he makes a sudden spring. Aha! he has got it now—yes!—but he has leapt into the fiery chasm, and with a *burst bubble* in his hand he goes before his God and Maker!

# POETICAL PIECES:

## HUMOROUS.

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### THE LOVE-LETTER.—Austin Dobson.

If this should fail, why then I scarcely know
  What could succeed. Here 's brilliancy (and banter),
Byron *ad lib.*, a chapter of Rousseau ;—
  If this should fail, then *tempora mutantur ;*
Style 's out of date, and love, as a profession,
Acquires no aid from beauty of expression.

'The men who think as I, I fear, are few'—
  (Cynics would say 'twere well if they were fewer) ;
'I am not what I seem'—(indeed, 'tis true ;
  Though, as a sentiment, it might be newer) ;
'Mine is a soul whose deeper feelings lie
More deep than words'—(as these exemplify).

'I will not say when first your beauty's sun
  Illumed my life'—(it needs imagination) ;
'For me to see you and to love were one'—
  (This will account for some precipitation) ;
'Let it suffice that worship more devoted
Ne'er throbbed,' *et cætera.* The rest is quoted.

'If Love can look with all-prophetic eye'—
  (Ah, if he could, how many would be single !)
'If truly spirit unto spirit cry'—
  (The ears of some most terribly must tingle !)

'Then I have dreamed you will not turn your face.'
This next, I think, is more than commonplace.

'Why should we speak, if Love, interpreting,
Forestall the speech with favour found before?
Why should we plead?—it were an idle thing,
If Love himself be Love's ambassador!'
Blot, as I live! Shall we erase it? No:—
'Twill show we write *currente calamo*.

'My fate,—my fortune, I commit to you,'—
(In point of fact, the latter 's not extensive);
'Without you I am poor indeed'—(strike through,
'Tis true but crude—'twould make her apprehensive);
'My life is yours—I lay it at your feet'—
(Having no choice but Hymen or the Fleet).

'Give me the right to stand within the shrine,
Where never yet my faltering feet intruded;
Give me the right to call you wholly mine'—
(That is, Consols and Three-per-Cents. included);
'To guard your rest from every care that cankers—
To keep your life'—(and balance at your banker's).

'Compel me not to long for your reply;
Suspense makes havoc with the mind'—(and muscles);
'Winged Hope takes flight'—(which means that I must fly,
Default of funds, to Paris or to Brussels);
'I cannot wait! My own, my queen—Priscilla!
Write by return.' And *now* for a Manilla!

'Miss Blank,' at 'Blank.' Jemima, let it go;
And I, meanwhile, will idle with 'Sir Walter;'
Stay, let me keep the first rough copy, though—
'Twill serve again. There 's but the name to alter,
And Love—that starves—must knock at every portal,
*In formâ pauperis*. We are but mortal.

(From *Old World Idylls*, by kind permission of the author.)

## HOW OUR VICAR GOT HIS DEANERY.

J. E. M. PROWER.

In a snug country village remote from a town,
Our quiet old vicar had long settled down.
An old college Fellow, he knew nothing more
Of the world than to think modern fashions a bore.
Old friends and old notions still had his support
In theology, politics, manners, and port.
He raised his own cucumbers, weeded his borders,
Discoursed with the doctor on parish disorders;
Presided at vestry, distributed coal,
Did his best for his flock both in body and soul;
He kept them all constantly under his sight,
And penned his discourses on Saturday night;
Digesting his dinner and text as he sat
By a good sea-coal fire, along with his cat.
He was slightly pig-headed, but kind and forgiving—
The simplest but truest old gentleman living.

This quaint little household, so snug and symmetrical,
One day felt a shock little less than electrical:
From his patron, an Earl, came a letter addressed
To our vicar, red-sealed with supporters and crest.
Within it were stated his wishes, to meet
His old college friend at his new country-seat:
'As the days are now short, and the weather not fine,
There's a bed at your service, and pray come to dine.'

There was no time to lose; so he packed up his bag;
Farmer Hodge lent his trap, the churchwarden his nag.
The ribbons were handled by Nathan the clerk;
It was not quite the turn-out one meets in the Park.

At the mansion arrived, in the drawing-room seated,
With the greatest respect he soon found himself treated.

He was quite made at home; and the hostess and host
Vied each with the other who 'd welcome him most;
While a group of gay ladies collected around him:
They had read Doctor Syntax, and guessed they had found him.
'Mid the buzz of fast talking, he soon caught the sound
Of a something like 'Kettledrum' whispered around;
And not knowing then what a 'kettledrum' meant,
Expected some music, and waited content.

Then the doors were thrown open—the room was ablaze
With lights borne by servants, and bright silver trays.
Tea, coffee, and cake round the circle were handed;
But the vicar, perplexed, couldn't half understand it.
He had meant to have dinner, neglecting his lunch
For visions of venison, real turtle, and punch.
But, contented the best of the bargain to make,
He went in, in style, at the coffee and cake;
Thinking, 'What a mistake I 've been making, I see!
Why, bless me! I 'm only in time for the tea!'
So he smothered his grief; but a move occurred later
Which made his perplexity greater and greater:
The guests one by one took a bedchamber light,
Slipping quietly off without saying good-night;
And before he could think what the dickens was in it,
He found himself left all alone for a minute!
When, thinking to do like the others was best,
He merely exclaimed, as he followed the rest:
'How the great are maligned! 'Tis believed by the nation
They indulge in late hours and like dissipation.
What lies all these Radical papers have said!
Why, it 's scarce eight o'clock, and we 're all off to bed!'

His bedroom was all that his heart could desire,
With a jug of hot water and brisk cheery fire;
And having no longer excuse or impediment,
He undressed, blew his light out, and straight into bed he went.

He had not been there long, when the sound of a gong
The passage came mellowly stealing along;

Not with fierce bangs and crashing,
And riot and dashing,
But with soft modulation, like bees in a tub,
Finishing off with a faint rub-a-dub.
The melodious hum on his drowsy ear pouring
Only made him exclaim, 'Why, there 's somebody snoring.'

Now, warned by this gong, all the party below
Round the dining-room table were ranged in a row;
But one seat was vacant. 'Why, who can be late?'
Said the Earl, who was not in a humour to wait.
'Why, the chaplain 's not here. What can keep him so long?
Run, Wilson, and beat a loud peal on the gong.'

The gong soon gave out a most terrible roar:
It had never been half so belaboured before.
In the vicar's apartment it echoed like thunder;
And he leaped bolt upright, wild with terror and wonder.
'Twas like Giant Blunderbore beating a metal drum.
'Good gracious!' he cried; 'why, that can't be the kettledrum.'
Then he rushed to the passage; but nothing he found
To assist him, but darkness and silence all round.
His heart 'gainst his ribs fluttered quicker and quicker,
When again the gong crashed, and away flew the vicar.

He soon lost his way—at a corner he stumbled,
And down a back staircase half-ran and half-tumbled;
And an accident happened that made his pace merrier—
He trod on two cats and upset a bull-terrier.
At the foot was a door—he had no time to knock at it,
For his impetus sent him head-first with a shock at it.

In a snug, cosy room, by a bright polished grate,
Mrs Dobbs, the housekeeper, was sitting in state.
On the grate was a kettle—the kettle was steaming,
And Mrs Dobbs watched it with countenance beaming;
Then sugar and lemon, the peel and the juice,
She put in a covered jug ready for use;

And next a stone bottle proceeded to fork out
From a cupboard hard by, and pop came the cork out.
'Twas a spirit that cheers, and at times makes one frisky:
The gods call it nectar, and Irishmen—whisky.
And, lastly, when these preparations were over,
Poured in boiling water, and shut down the cover.

How oft when we think our surroundings are snuggest,
With a potion all bitter comes Fate, like a druggist!
Mrs Dobbs had just settled her eyelids to close
For a nap, with the fragrance of punch in her nose,
When a crash came, and, presto! a figure was visible:
'Twas startling, but too incorrect to be risible.
I cannot describe it; in fact, such a deshabille
In the presence of ladies is quite inadmissible;
For a nightshirt and cap is not quite the costume
To appear in at night in a housekeeper's room.
So thought Mrs Dobbs—you could scarce call it *thinking*,
For all of a sudden she found herself sinking;
And quite unaware the intruder was clerical,
She went off at once in the state called hysterical;
She had just strength to snatch up the jugful of liquor,
And discharge it direct in the face of the vicar.

Now the scream which the housekeeper gave, as she went off,
Had quite the effect of a telegram sent off
On a bevy of maids who were chatting their fill
In a place called a stillroom, where no one was still.
Their clatter was stopped; in a second or more
In a terrified group they appeared at the door,
And peeped in a moment, when back they all ran,
For there, all in white, was a ghost or a man!
Who eyed them askance with a rueful grimace;
He was stamping with pain, and was mopping his face.
At his feet lay the housekeeper, like a dead body;
And the whole room was steaming with hot whisky-toddy.

Meanwhile, in the dining-room all were quite merry.
The first course was ended—the soup and the sherry;

But instead of the *entrée* detailed on the *carte*,
Came one that made all of them rise with a start.
It dashed through the door with a terrible clatter;
'Twas a woman for certain—but mad as a hatter,
With ribbons all flying and wild streaming hair,
With mouth all agape and eyes all astare;
And, rushing as fast as the famed Tam o' Shanter,
She upset the butler, and smashed his decanter,
And screamed out in accents of horror and dread:
'Sure, his Rev'rence is drunk, and the housekeeper dead!'
I refrain from detailing a long explanation
Of the scene that ensued on this strange revelation;
How the guests rushed at once to the scene of the tragic act,
And returned in a roar, as if changed by some magic act;
While faces all pallid were, two minutes after,
Convulsed with loud shouts of unquenchable laughter.

Suffice it that one who enjoyed it the most
In her Majesty's Cabinet held a high post;
And he said: 'Since I 've guided the helm of the nation
I 've never enjoyed so divine a sensation.
What does he not merit who 's had such a fright
To supply us with special amusement to-night?
Come, give us your votes. What shall be his reward?
He 'd be quite out of place if we made him a lord.
We can scarce make a baronet of the old body,
Nor even a Knight of the Bath—of hot toddy;
But to-morrow, at Windsor, I 'll speak to the Queen,
And the next Dean that dies—why, our friend shall be Dean.'

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## A BALLAD OF THE PERIOD.—C. S. CALVERLEY.

### PART I.

The auld wife sat at her ivied door
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
A thing she had frequently done before;
And her knitting reposed on her aproned knees.

The piper he piped on the hill-top high
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
Till the cow said 'I die,' and the goose asked 'Why?'
And the dog said nothing, but searched for fleas.

The farmer he strode through the dim farmyard
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
His last brew of cider had turned out hard—
The connection of which with the plot one sees.

The farmer's daughter hath frank blue eyes
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
She hears the rook caw in the windy skies
As she sits at her lattice and shells her peas.

The farmer's daughter hath ripe red lips
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
If you try to approach her, away she skips
Over tables and chairs with apparent ease.

The farmer's daughter hath soft brown hair
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
And I met with a ballad, I can't tell where,
Which mainly consisted of lines like these.

PART II.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her dimpled cheeks
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
And spake not a word. While a lady speaks
There is hope—but *she* didn't even sneeze.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her crimson cheeks
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
She gave up mending her father's breeks,
And let the cat roll in her best chemise.

She sat, with her hands 'neath her burning cheeks
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*),
And gazed at the piper for thirteen weeks;
Then she followed him out o'er the misty leas.

Her sheep followed her, as their tails did them
(*Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese*);
And this song is considered a perfect gem;
And as to the meaning, it 's what you please.

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## NEMESIS.—G. CLIFTON BINGHAM.

When he and she were ten and eight,
His little wife was she;
And both were quite content to wait
Till he a man should be.
They played together as they grew;
A tyrant lord was he—
They 'd quarrel when the clock was two,
And make it up at three!

At fifteen he on girlish toys
Looks down with scornful mien;
And she disdains to play with boys
At feminine thirteen.
His matrimonial views are cool,
At love he gaily mocks;
She boasts a dearest friend at school,
And daily lengthening frocks!

When twenty sees him quite a man,
Its bliss has one alloy:
She laughs at him behind her fan,
And calls him such a boy.
For she has lovers now galore,
Who smiles and favour crave;
And he who tyrannised of yore,
Is now her humble slave!

They now are middle-aged; 'tis said
His chin a beard now covers;

And, strange to say, she 's not yet wed,
In spite of all her lovers!
But vain for her to sigh for him,
For so the story tells—
Grown weary of caprice and whim,
He 's married some one else!

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## THE NANTUCKET SKIPPER.—James T. Fields.

Many a long, long year ago
Nantucket skippers had a plan
Of finding out, though 'lying low,'
How near New York their schooners ran.

They greased the lead before it fell,
And then by sounding, through the night,
Knowing the soil that stuck so well,
They always guessed their reckoning right.

A skipper gray, whose eyes were dim,
Could tell, by tasting, just the spot,
And so below he 'd 'douse the glim,'—
After, of course, his 'something hot.'

Snug in his berth at eight o'clock
This ancient skipper might be found;
No matter how his craft would rock,
He slept—for skippers' naps are sound.

The watch on deck would now and then
Run down and wake him, with the lead;
He 'd up, and taste, and tell the men
How many miles they went ahead.

One night 'twas Jotham Marden's watch,
A curious wag—the pedlar's son;
And so he mused (the wanton wretch!),
'To-night I 'll have a grain of fun.

'We 're all a set of stupid fools,
To think the skipper knows, by tasting,
What ground he 's on; Nantucket schools
Don't teach such stuff, with all their basting.'

And so he took the well-greased lead,
And rubbed it o'er a box of earth
That stood on deck—a parsnip-bed,
And then he sought the skipper's berth.

'Where are we now, sir? Please to taste.'
The skipper yawned, put out his tongue,
Opened his eyes in wondrous haste,
And then upon the floor he sprung!

The skipper stormed, and tore his hair,
Thrust on his boots, and roared to Marden,
'Nantucket 's sunk, and here we are
Right over Mistress Hackett's garden!'

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## THE BICYCLE RIDE.—James Clarence Harvey.

You have read of the ride of Paul Revere,
And of Gilpin's ride, so fraught with fear;
Skipper Ireson's ride in a cart,
And the ride where Sheridan played a part;
Calendar's ride on a brazen hack,
And Islam's prophet on Al Borak;
The fateful ride to Aix from Ghent,
And a dozen others of like portent,
But you never have heard of a bicycle spin
Which was piously ended, though started in sin.

Tom was a country parson's son,
Fresh from college and full of fun,
Fond of flirting with bright-eyed girls,
Raving, in verse, over golden curls,

Sowing a wild oat here and there,
In a way that made the parson stare
And chide him sternly, when face to face,
While in private he laughed at the young scapegrace.
But the wildest passion the boy could feel
Was the love he bore for his shining wheel.

He rode it by night, and he rode it by day,
If he went two rods or ten miles away;
And Deacon Smith was heard to remark
That he met that pesky thing in the dark,
And it went right by with a glint and a gleam
And a wild 'hoot-toot' that made him scream;
In spite of the fact that he could tell
That evil spirits were all in—well—
He wouldn't meet that thing again
For a corn-crib full of good, ripe grain.

One Sunday morning the sun was bright,
The birds' throats bursting with glad delight,
The parson mounted his plump old bay
And jogged to the church, two miles away;
While Tom wheeled round, ten miles or more,
And hid his wheel by the chancel door;
And he thought, as he sat in the parson's pew,
'I wonder what makes dad look so blue,'
Till it came like a flash to his active mind,
He 'd left his sermon and specs behind.

Now the parson was old, and his eyes were dim,
And he couldn't have read a line or a hymn
Without his specs for a mint of gold;
And his head turned hot, while his toes turned cold;
And right in the midst of his mental shock
The parson deceived his trusting flock,
And gave them eternal life and a crown
From the book he was holding upside down.
Tom, the rascal, five minutes before,
Like an arrow, had shot from the chancel door.

The horses he frightened I never can tell,
Nor how the old church folks were shocked as well,
And they said they feared that the parson's lad
'Was a-gettin' wild,' and would 'go to the bad;'
For 'twas wicked enough to set folks in a craze
Without 'ridin' sech races on Sabbath-days;'
And they thought the length of the parson's prayer
Had something to do with his fatherly care—
While the truth of it was, which he afterwards dropped,
He didn't know what he could do when he stopped.

Of course you know how the story will end;
The prayer was finished and duly 'Amen'd,'
When Tom, all dust, to the pulpit flew,
And laid down the specs and the sermon too.
Then the parson preached in a timid way
Of sinful pleasure on Sabbath-day;
And he added a postscript, not in the text,
Saying that, when they were sore perplexed,
Each must decide as he chanced to feel,
And Tom chuckled, 'Sundays I 'll ride my wheel.'

---

## 'ONLY A WOMAN'S HAIR.'—J. STEWART.

Late judge beside an Indian river,
  My wife's great-uncle, frail and old,
Minus his temper and his liver,
  Came home with stores of wealth untold.

We 'd named our eldest boy Ramchunder;
  We 'd called our house 'The Mangostines;'
And, but for a domestic blunder,
  Should now enjoy his princely means.

We laid down yards of Indian matting,
  Compounded jars of sangaree;
The cook had turned, by constant patting,
  Our Dorset butter into ghee.

We warmed the house from base to attics,
Although the season was July.
He brought a train of Asiatics,
Whose faces made the children cry.

My wife received him in a hurry,
Her brow perplexed with household care;
She 'd been all day about the curry,
With scarcely time to dress her hair.

The children then were all paraded;
He loudly blessed our little Ram;
Each wore a tussah richly braided,
And each performed a deep salaam.

We closed the windows while at dinner;
How hot the soup and chutney were!
John punkahed well for a beginner;
My wife wore roses in her hair.

The pains we 'd taken were not wasted;
He praised our sauce of capsicum;
Said that such pepper he 'd not tasted
Since with the Rifles at Dum-Dum.

The curry—careful preparation,
With glowing chillis round it stuck—
Appeared; he sniffed his approbation,
And trifled with a Bombay duck.

The rice was dried to pure perfection;
He filled his mouth—a silence fell—
Then—starting, with an interjection
Which I am too polite to tell—

He gasped, he wheezed, he coughed, he spluttered;
We loosed his stock, we gave him air,
And with a stifled voice he muttered,
'You 've choked me with a filthy hair.'

Alas! it was no hair of minion;
My wife confessed she dressed in haste,
And while Maria combed her chignon,
Herself had mixed the curry paste!
. . . . . .
They proved the will of Thule Crompton,
By which we never got a groat;
His thousands found their way to Brompton,
For the Diseases of the Throat.

---

## FATE AND LACE-WORK.—MADELINE S. BRIDGES.

Of course I loved him. (One, two, three,
And skip the fourth.) Dear fellow! Yes,
He fairly worshipped me. (Now see,
This time you take two stitches less.)
Quite tall, well built—his eyes were gray.
(You pull that thread the other way.)

(Two loops.) A dimple in his chin,
The sweetest hair. (My dear; observe.)
He was a poet. (There begin
The second row, and make the curve.)
I'm sure you'd like to see the rhymes
He wrote me. (Round the edge—three times.)

Poor boy! We were so sad to part;
He died quite young. (Another one,
But not so tight.) It broke my heart.
(There, that was very nicely done.)
He was my first love, and—my last!
(Be careful, dear! Don't go so fast.)

My husband? (Oh, you must take *care!*)
I met him (Now the pattern shows)
In Europe. We were married there.
And—oh—well—yes—as marriage goes
I'm happy. (Keep the thread quite straight,
Or it will tangle.) Such is Fate!

## LAUGH AND GROW FAT.—W. M. PRAED.

There 's nothing here on earth deserves
  One-half the thought we waste about it;
And thinking but destroys the nerves,
  When we could do as well without it.
If folks would let the world go round,
  And pay their tithes and eat their dinners,
Such doleful looks would not be found
  To frighten us poor laughing sinners.
Never sigh when you can sing,
But laugh, like me, at everything!

One plagues himself about the sun,
  And puzzles on, through every weather,
What time he 'll rise, how long he 'll run,
  And when he 'll leave us altogether.
Now matters it a pebble-stone
  Whether he dines at six or seven?
If they don't leave the sun alone,
  At last they 'll plague him out of heaven!
Never sigh when you can sing,
But laugh, like me, at everything!

Another spins from out his brains
  Fine cobwebs to amuse his neighbours,
And gets, for all his toil and pains,
  Reviewed and laughed at for his labours.
Fame is *his* star! and fame is sweet;
  And praise is pleasanter than honey—
*I* write at just so much a sheet,
  And Messrs Longmans pay the money.
Never sigh when you can sing,
But laugh, like me, at everything!

My brother gave his heart away
  To Mercandotti when he met her;
She married Mr Ball one day—
  He 's gone to Sweden to forget her.

I had a charmer too—and sighed
And raved all day and night about her;
She caught a cold, poor thing! and died,
And I—am just as fat without her.
Never sigh when you can sing,
But laugh, like me, at everything!

For tears are vastly pretty things,
But make one very thin and taper;
And sighs are music's sweetest strings,
Yet sound most beautiful—on paper!
'Thought' is the gazer's brightest star,
Her gems alone are worth his finding;
But, as I 'm not particular,
Please God! I 'll keep on 'never minding,'
Never sigh when you can sing,
But laugh, like me, at everything!

Ah! in this troubled world of ours,
A laughter-mine 's a glorious treasure;
And separating thorns from flowers
Is half a pain and half a pleasure.
And why be grave instead of gay?
Why feel athirst while folks are quaffing?
Oh! trust me, whatsoe'er they say,
There 's nothing half so good as laughing!
Never cry while you can sing,
But laugh, like me, at everything!

---

## A CULPRIT.—MARGARET VANDEGRIFT.

The maiden aunt, in her straight-backed chair,
With a flush on her pale and wrinkled cheek
And a horrified, mortified, mystified air,
Was just about to speak.

And the maiden niece—a nice little maid—
  Stood meekly twirling her thumbs about,
With a half-triumphant, half-afraid,
  And wholly bewitching pout.

Said the maiden aunt, 'Will you please explain
  What your heads were doing so close together?
You could easily, I assure you, Jane,
  Have knocked me down with a feather!

'When I think of your bringing-up—my care,
  My scrupulous care—and it's come to this! you
Appeared to be sitting calmly there,
  And letting a young man kiss you!

'Now tell me at once just what he said,
  And what you replied. This is quite a trial,
So do not stand there and hang your head,
  Or attempt the least denial!

'If I catch you once more in such a fix,
  Though you are eighteen, I can tell you, Jane,
I shall treat you just as if you were six,
  And send you to school again!

'Are you going to tell me what he said,
  And what you said? I 'll not stand this trifling.
So look at me, Jane! Lift up your head!
  Don't go on as if you were stifling!'

Her voice was shaken, of course, with fear.
  'He said—he said, "Will you have me, Jane?"
And I said I would. But, indeed, aunt dear,
  We 'll never do so again.'

## THE AMATEUR RIDER.—A. B. PATERSON.

'*Him* going to ride for us! *Him*—with the pants and the eyeglass and all.
Amateur! Don't he just look it?—it 's twenty to one on a fall.
Boss must be gone off his head to be sending our steeplechase crack
Out over fences like these with an object like that on his back.

'Ride! Don't tell *me* he can ride. With his pants just as loose as balloons,
How can he sit on his horse? and his spurs like a pair of harpoons.
Ought to be under the Dog Act, he ought, and be kept off the course.
Fall! Why, he 'd fall off a cart, let alone off a steeplechase horse.'

. . . . . .

'Yessir! the 'orse is all ready—I wish you 'd have rode him before;
Nothing like knowing your 'orse, sir, and this chap 's a terror to bore;
Battleaxe always could pull, and he rushes his fences like fun—
Stands off his jump twenty feet, and then springs like a shot from a gun.

'Oh, he can jump 'em all right, sir; you make no mistake, 'e 's a toff;
Clouts 'em in earnest, too, sometimes; you mind that he don't clout you off—
Don't seem to mind how he hits 'em, his shins is as hard as a nail;
Sometimes you 'll see the fence shake and the splinters fly up from the rail.

'All you can do is to hold him and just let him jump as he likes,
Give him his head at the fences, and hang on like death if he strikes;
Don't let him run himself out—you can lie third or fourth in the race
Until you clear the stone wall, and from that you can put on the pace.

'Fell at that wall once, he did, and it gave him a regular spread;
Ever since that time he flies it—he'll stop if you pull at his head.
Just let him race—you can trust him—he'll take first-class care he don't fall;
And I think that's the lot—but remember, *he must have his head at the wall.*'

. . . . . .

'Well, he's down safe as far as the start, and he seems to sit on pretty neat,
Only his baggified breeches would ruinate anyone's seat—
They're away—here they come—the first fence, and he's head over heels for a crown!
Good for the new chum—he's over, and two of the others are down!

'Now for the treble, my hearty. By Jove! he can ride after all;
Whoop, that's your sort—let him fly them! He hasn't much fear of a fall.
Who in the world would have thought it? And aren't they just going a pace?
Little Recruit in the lead there will make it a stoutly-run race.

'Lord! But they're racing in earnest—and down goes Recruit on his head,
Rolling clean over his boy—it's a miracle if he ain't dead.
Battleaxe, Battleaxe yet! Look there, he's got most of 'em beat!
Ho! did you see how he struck, and the swell never moved in his seat?

'Second time round, and, by Jingo! he's holding his lead of 'em well.
Hark to him clouting the timber! It don't seem to trouble the swell.
Now for the wall—let him rush it. A thirty-foot leap, I declare—
Never a shift in his seat, and he's racing for home like a hare.

'What 's that that 's chasing him?—Rataplan—regular demon to stay!
Sit down and ride for your life now! Oh! good; that 's the style —come away!
Rataplan 's certain to beat you, unless you can give him the slip;
Sit down and rub in the whalebone now—give him the spurs and the whip!

'Battleaxe, Battleaxe yet—and it 's Battleaxe wins for a crown;
Look at him rushing the fences; he wants to bring t' other chap down.
Rataplan never will catch him if only he keeps on his pins;
Now! the last fence! and he 's over it! Battleaxe, Battleaxe wins!'

. . . . . .

'Well, sir, you rode him just perfect—I knew from the first you could ride.
Some of the chaps said you couldn't, an' I says just like this a' one side:
"Mark me," I says, "that 's a tradesman—the saddle is where he was bred."
Weight! You 're all right, sir, and thank you;' and them was the words that I said.

(From *The Man from Snowy River*, by kind permission of Messrs Angus & Robertson, Sydney.)

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## A NOVELETTE.—J. R. Scott.

### IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

A second's touch
Of hands—not much;
But listen:
A maiden sighs,
And see! her eyes,
They glisten!

A thrilling dance,
A killing glance,
A capture;
A snowy glove,
The pledge of love—
Oh, rapture!

A twilight shade,
Where plans are made:
Delightful!
A fond embrace;
A prying face—
How spiteful!

A swift good-bye,
A stifled sigh:
Conjecture.
A mother's room,
A daughter's gloom:
A lecture.

CHAPTER II.

A hurried flight,
A darksome night
That covers:
A heartfelt prayer,
Breathed by a pair
Of lovers.

A sacred aisle,
An angel's smile,
A marriage;
A vow for life,
A happy wife,
A carriage.

CHAPTER III.

A mother's tears,
A father's sneers:
'Forget her!'
A postman's knock,
A dreaded shock:
A letter.

A new-found son,
Two parents won:
A dower!
A little cad—
Their nephew—sad
And sour.

CHAPTER IV.

A baby-boy,
Ma's precious joy,
Is sleeping:
A little girl,
Pa's priceless pearl
Is peeping.

A happy pair
Upon one chair
Conversing;
While grandpapa
And grandmamma
Are nursing!

---

REVERIE IN CHURCH.—GEO. A. BAKER.

Too early, of course! How provoking!
I told ma just how it would be.
I might as well have on a wrapper,
For there 's not a soul here yet to see.

There! Sue Delaplaine's pew is empty—
I declare if it isn't too bad!
I know my suit cost more than hers did,
And I wanted to see her look mad.
I do think that sexton 's too stupid—
He 's put some one else in our pew—
And the girl's dress just kills mine completely;
Now what am I going to do?
The psalter, and Sue isn't here yet!
I don't care, I think it 's a sin
For people to get late to service,
Just to make a great show coming in.
Perhaps she is sick, and can't get here—
She said she 'd a headache last night.
How mad she 'll be after her fussing!
I declare it would serve her just right.
Oh, you 've got here at last, my dear, have you?
Well, I don't think you need be so proud
Of that bonnet if Virot did make it;
It 's horrid fast-looking and loud.
What a dress!—for a girl in her senses
To go on the street in light blue!—
And those coat-sleeves—they wore them last summer—
Don't doubt, though, that she thinks they 're new.
Mrs Gray's polonaise was imported—
So dreadful!—a minister's wife,
And thinking so much about fashion!—
A pretty example of life!
The altar 's dressed sweetly—I wonder
Who sent those white flowers for the font!—
Some girl who 's gone on the assistant—
Don't doubt it was Bessie Lamont.
Just look at her now, little humbug!—
So devout—I suppose she don't know
That she 's bending her head too far over
And the end of her switches all show.
What a sight Mrs Ward is this morning!
That woman will kill me some day,

With her horrible lilacs and crimsons—
  Why will these old things dress so gay?
And there 's Jenny Wells with Fred Tracy—
  She 's engaged to him now—horrid thing!
Dear me! I 'd keep on my glove sometimes,
  If I did have a solitaire ring!
How *can* this girl next to me act so?—
  The way that she turns round and stares,
And then makes remarks about people :—
  She 'd better be saying her prayers.
Oh dear, what a dreadful long sermon!
  He must love to hear himself talk!
And it 's after twelve now—how provoking!
  I wanted to have a nice walk.
Through at last. Well, it isn't so dreadful
  After all, for we don't dine till one;
How can people say church is poky!—
  So wicked!—I think it 's real fun.

---

## THE DECLARATION.—N. P. Willis.

'Twas late, and the gay company was gone,
And light lay soft on the deserted room
From alabaster vases, and a scent
Of orange-leaves and sweet verbena came
Through the unshuttered window on the air;
And the rich pictures, with their dark old tints,
Hung like a twilight landscape, and all things
Seemed hushed into a slumber. Isabel—
The dark-eyed, spiritual Isabel—
Was leaning on her harp, and I had stayed
To whisper what I could not when the crowd
Hung on her look like worshippers. I knelt,
And with the fervour of a lip unused
To the cold breath of reason, told my love.
There was no answer, and I took the hand

That rested on the strings, and pressed a kiss
Upon it unforbidden—and again
Besought her that this silent evidence
That I was not indifferent to her heart
Might have the seal of one sweet syllable.
I kissed the small white fingers as I spoke,
And she withdrew them gently, and upraised
Her forehead from its resting-place, and looked
Earnestly on me. *She had been asleep!*

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## THE LUCKY HORSE-SHOE.—James T. Fields.

A farmer travelling with his load
Picked up a horse-shoe on the road,
And nailed it fast to his barn door,
That luck might down upon him pour,
That every blessing known in life
Might crown his homestead and his wife,
And never any kind of harm
Descend upon his growing farm.

But dire ill-fortune soon began
To visit the astounded man.
His hens declined to lay their eggs,
His bacon tumbled from the pegs,
And rats devoured the fallen legs;
His corn, that never failed before,
Mildewed and rotted on the floor;
His grass refused to end in hay;
His cattle died, or went astray;
In short, all moved the crooked way.

Next spring a great drought baked the sod,
And roasted every pea in pod;
The beans declared they could not grow
So long as Nature acted so;
Redundant insects reared their brood
To starve for lack of juicy food;

The staves from barrel-sides went off
As if they had the whooping-cough,
And nothing of the useful kind
To hold together felt inclined:
In short, it was no use to try
While all the land was in a fry.

One morn, demoralised with grief,
The farmer clamoured for relief;
And prayed right hard to understand
What witchcraft now possessed his land;
Why house and farm in misery grew
Since he nailed up that 'lucky' shoe.

While thus dismayed o'er matters wrong
An old man chanced to trudge along,
To whom he told, with wormwood tears,
How his affairs were in arrears,
And what a desperate state of things
A picked-up horse-shoe sometimes brings.

The stranger asked to see the shoe;
The farmer brought it into view;
But, when the old man raised his head,
He laughed outright and quickly said,
'No wonder skies upon you frown—
You've nailed the horse-shoe upside down;
Just turn it round, and soon you'll see
How you and Fortune will agree.'

The farmer turned the horse-shoe round,
And showers began to swell the ground;
The sunshine laughed among his grain,
And heaps on heaps piled up the wain;
The loft his hay could barely hold,
His cattle did as they were told;
His fruit-trees needed sturdy props
To hold the gathering apple crops;
His turnip and potato fields
Astonished all men by their yields;

Folks never saw such ears of corn
As in his smiling fields were born;
His neighbours marvelled more and more
To see the increase in his store.
And now the merry farmer sings,
'There are two ways of doing things;
And when for good-luck you would pray,
Nail up your horse-shoe the right way.'

---

## FROM HAND TO MOUTH.—ANON.

'From hand to mouth,' he gaily said,
And pressed her dainty finger-tips,
Which salutation quickly led
To one upon her perfect lips,
As fair as roses in the South:
'From hand to mouth.'

So she was won, and so was he.
'Twas something like a year ago,
And now they both are one, you see,
Although which one I hardly know.
They 're living somewhere in the South,
'From hand to mouth.'

---

## MONEY MUSK.—BENJ. F. TAYLOR.

Ah! the buxom girls that helped the boys—
The nobler Helens of humbler Troys—
As they stripped the husks with rustling fold
From eight-rowed corn as yellow as gold,

By the candle-light, in pumpkin bowls,
And the gleams that showed fantastic holes
In the quaint old lantern's tattooed tin,
From the hermit glim set up within;

By the rarer light in girlish eyes
As dark as wells or as blue as skies.
I hear the laugh when the ear is red,
I see the blush with the forfeit paid,

The cedar cakes with the ancient twist,
The cider cup that the girls have kissed;
And I see the fiddler through the dusk
As he twangs the ghost of 'Money Musk!'

The boys and girls in a double row
Wait face to face till the magic bow
Shall whip the tune from the violin,
And the merry pulse of the feet begin.

## MONEY MUSK.

In shirt of check, and tallowed hair,
The fiddler sits in the bulrush chair,
Like Moses' basket stranded there
On the brink of Father Nile.
He feels the fiddle's slender neck,
Picks out the note, with thrum and check;
And times the tune with nod and beck,
And thinks it a weary while.
All ready! Now he gives the call,—
Cries, 'Honour to the ladies!' All
The jolly tides of laughter fall
And ebb in a happy smile.

'Begin.' D-o-w-n comes the bow on every string.
'First couple, join hands and swing!'
As light as any blue-bird's wing—
'Swing once and a half time round'—
Whirls Mary Martin all in blue,
Calico gown and stockings new,
And tinted eyes that tell you true,
Dance all to the dancing sound.

She flits about big Moses Brown,
Who holds her hands to keep her down,
And thinks her hair a golden crown,
And his heart turns over once!
His cheek with Mary's breath is wet—
It gives a second somerset!
He means to win the maiden yet:
Alas for the awkward dance!

'Your stoga boot has crushed my toe!
I'd rather dance with one-legged Joe!
You clumsy fellow!' 'Pass below!'
And the first pair dance apart.
Then 'Forward, six!'—advance, retreat,
Like midges gay in sunbeam street.
'Tis Money Musk by merry feet
And the Money Musk by heart!

'Three-quarters round your partner swing!'
'Across the set!' The rafters ring,
The girls and boys have taken wing,
And have brought their roses out!
'Tis 'Forward, six!' with rustic grace,
Ah, rarer far than—'Swing to place!'—
Than golden clouds of old point lace
They bring the dance about.

Then clasping hands, all—'Right and left!'—
All swiftly weave the measure deft
Across the woof in loving weft,
And the Money Musk is done!
Oh, dancers of the rustling husk!
Good-night, sweethearts; 'tis growing dusk,—
Good-night for aye to Money Musk,
For the heavy march begun!

## A YEAR'S WOOING.—H. L. ROBERTSON.

'Twas autumn when first they stood on the bridge;
Ripe pears on the pear-tree, ripe corn on the ridge;
The swallows flew swiftly far up in the blue,
And, speeding still southward, were lost to the view.
Said he, 'Can you love me as I can love you?'
She said, quite demurely, 'Already I do!'

'Twas winter when next they met on the bridge;
The pear-trees were brown, and white was the ridge;
The swallows were feathering their nests in Algiers.
She looked in his face, and she burst into tears!
His nose it was pinched and his lips they were blue.
Said she, 'I can't love you!' Said he, 'Nor I you!'

'Twas spring-time when next they stood on the bridge,
And white was the pear-tree and green was the ridge;
The swallows had thoughts of a speedy return;
And the midges were dancing adown the brown burn.
He said, 'Pretty maiden, let bygones go by—
Can you love me again?' She said, 'I can try.'

'Twas summer when next they stood on the bridge;
There were pears on the pear-tree, tall corn on the ridge;
The swallows wheeled round them, far up in the blue,
Then swooped down and snapped up a midgelet or two.
Said he, 'Lest some trifle should come in the way,
And part us again, will you mention the day?'
She stood, looking down on the fast-flowing rill,
Then answered demurely, 'As soon as you will!'

## THE CHURCH SPIDER.—ANON.

Two spiders—so the story goes—
  Upon a living bent,
Entered the meeting-house one day,
And hopefully were heard to say:
'Here we will have at least fair-play,
  With nothing to prevent.'

Each chose his place and went to work—
  The light web grew apace;
One on the altar spun his thread,
But shortly came the sexton dread,
And swept him off, and so, half-dead,
  He sought another place.

'I 'll try the pulpit next,' said he;
  'There surely is a prize;
The desk appears so neat and clean,
I 'm sure no spider there has been—
Besides, how often have I seen
  The pastor brushing flies!'

He tried the pulpit; but, alas!
  His hopes proved visionary;
With dusting-brush the sexton came,
And spoiled his geometric game,
Nor gave him time or space to claim
  The right of sanctuary.

At length, half-starved, and weak and lean,
  He sought his former neighbour,
Who now had grown so sleek and round,
He weighed a fraction of a pound,
And looked as if the art he 'd found
  Of living without labour.

'How is it, friend,' he asked, 'that I
Endured such thumps and knocks,
While you have grown so very gross?'
''Tis plain,' he answered—'not a loss
I 've met since first I spun across
The contribution box.'

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## THE HINDU'S PARADISE.—ANON.

A Hindu died—a happy thing to do
When twenty years united to a shrew.
Released, he hopefully for entrance cries
Before the gates of Brahma's paradise.
'Hast been through purgatory?' Brahma said.
'I have been married'—and he hung his head.
'Come in, come in, and welcome, too, my son!
Marriage and purgatory are as one.'
In bliss extreme he entered heaven's door,
And knew the peace he ne'er had known before.

He scarce had entered in the garden fair,
Another Hindu asked admission there.
The self-same question Brahma asked again:
'Hast been through purgatory?' 'No—what then?'
'Thou canst not enter!' did the god reply.
'He who went in was there no more than I.'
'All that is true, but he has married been,
And so on earth has suffered for all sin!'
'Married? 'Tis well; for I 've been married twice!
'Begone! We'll have no fools in Paradise!'

## THE BALLAD OF THE GREEN OLD MAN.

CHARLES G. LELAND.

It was a balmeous day in May, when spring was springing high,
And all amid the buttercups the bees did butterfly;
While the butterflies were being enraptured in the flowers,
And winsome frogs were singing soft morals to the showers.

Green were the emerald grasses which grew upon the plain,
And green too were the verdant boughs which rippled in the rain.
Far green likewise the apple hue which clad the distant hill;
But at the station sat a man who looked far greener still—

An ancient man, a boy-like man, a person mild and meek,
A being who had little tongue, and nary bit of cheek;
And while upon him pleasant-like I saw the ladies look,
He sat a-counting money in a brownsome pocket-book.

Then to him a policeman spoke: 'Unless you feel too proud,
You 'd better stow away that cash while you 're in this here crowd;
There 's many a chap about this spot who 'd clean you out like ten.'
'And can it be,' exclaimed the man, 'there are such wicked men?

'Then I will put my greenbacks up all in my pocket-book,
And keep it buttoned very tight, and at the button look.'
He said it with a simple tone, and gave a simple smile—
You never saw a half-grown shad one-half so void of guile.

And the bumble-bees kept bumbling away among the flowers,
While distant frogs were frogging amid the summer showers,
And the tree-toads were tree-toadying in accents sharp or flat—
All nature seemed a-naturing as there the old man sat.

Then up and down the platform promiscuous he strayed,
Amid the waiting passengers he took his lemonade,
A-making little kind remarks unto them all at sight,
Until he met two travellers who looked cosmopolite.

Now even as the old was green, this pair were darkly brown;
They seemed to be of that degree which sports about the town.
Amid terrestrial mice, I ween, their destiny was Cat;
If ever men were gonoffs, I should say these two were that.

And they had watched that old man well with interested look,
And gazed him counting greenbacks in that brownsome pocket-book;
And the elder softly warbled with benevolential phiz,
'Green peas has come to market, and the veg'tables is riz.'

Yet still across the heavenly sky the clouds went clouding on,
The rush upon the gliding brook kept rushing all alone,
While the ducks upon the water were a-ducking just the same,
And every mortal human man kept on his little game.

And the old man to the strangers very affable let slip
How that zealousy policeman had given him the tip,
And how his cash was buttoned in his pocket dark and dim,
And how he guessed no man alive on earth could gammon him.

In ardent conversation ere long the three were steeped,
And in that good man's confidence the younger party deeped.
The p'liceman, as he shadowed them, exclaimed in blooming rage,
'They 're stuffin' of that duck, I guess, and leavin' out the sage.'

He saw the game distinctly, and inspected how it took,
And watched the reappearance of that brownsome pocket-book,
And how that futile ancient, ere he buttoned up his coat,
Had interchanged, obliging-like, a greensome coloured note;

And how they parted tenderly, and how the happy twain
Went out into the Infinite by taking of the train.
Then up the blue policeman came, and said, 'My ancient son,
Now you have gone and did it, say what you have been and done.'

And unto him the good old man replied with childish glee,
'They were as nice a two young men as I did ever see;
But they were in such misery their story made me cry;
So I lent 'em twenty dollars—which they'll pay me by and by.

'But as I had no twenty, we also did arrange,
They got from me a fifty bill, and gimme thirty change;
But they will send that fifty back, and by to-morrer's train'——
'That note,' out cried the constable, 'you'll never see again!'

'And that,' exclaimed the sweet old man, 'I hope I never may,
Because I do not care a cuss how far it keeps away;
For if I'm a judge of money, and I *reether* think I am,
The one I shoved was never worth a "continental damn."

'They hev wandered with their sorrers into the sunny South,
They hev got uncommon swallows and an extry lot of mouth.
In the next train to the North'ard I expect to widely roam,
And if any come inquirin', jist say I ain't at home.'

The p'liceman lifted up his glance unto the sunny skies—
I s'pose the light was fervent, for a tear were in his eyes—
And said, 'If in your travels a hat store you should see,
Just buy yourself a beaver tile and charge that tile to me.'

Whilst the robins were a-robbing across the meadow gay,
And the pigeons still a-pigeoning among the gleam of May,
All out of doors kept out of doors, as such-like only can,
A-singing of an endless hymn about that good old man.

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## THE WOOING.—Paul Laurence Dunbar.

A youth went faring up and down,
Alack and well-a-day!
He fared him to the market town,
Alack and well-a-day!
And there he met a maiden fair,
With hazel eyes and auburn hair;
His heart went from him then and there,
Alack and well-a-day.

She posies sold right merrily,
Alack and well-a-day!
But not a flower was fair as she,
Alack and well-a-day!
He bought a rose and sighed a sigh,
'Ah, dearest maiden, would that I
Might dare the seller, too, to buy!'
Alack and well-a-day.

She tossed her head, the coy coquette,
Alack and well-a-day!
'I 'm not, sir, in the market yet,'
Alack and well-a-day!
'Your love must cool upon the shelf;
Though much I sell for gold and pelf,
I 'm yet too young to sell myself,'
Alack and well-a-day!

The youth was filled with sorrow sore,
Alack and well-a-day!
And looked he at the maid once more,
Alack and well-a-day!
Then loud he cried, 'Fair maiden, if
Too young to sell, now, as I live,
You 're not too young yourself to give,'
Alack and well-a-day!

The little maid cast down her eyes,
Alack and well-a-day!
And many a flush began to rise,
Alack and well-a-day!
'Why, since you are so bold,' she said,
'I doubt not you are highly bred,
So take me!' and the twain were wed,
Alack and well-a-day!

## THE KNIGHT AND THE LADY.—Rev. R. H. Barham.

(*Abridged and Adapted for Recitation.*)

The Lady Jane was tall and slim,
The Lady Jane was fair;
And Sir Thomas, her lord, was stout of limb,
And his cough was short, and his eyes were dim,
And he wore green 'specs' with a tortoise-shell rim,
And his hat was remarkably broad in the brim,
And she was uncommonly fond of him—
And they were a loving pair!
And wherever they went, or wherever they came,
Every one hailed them with loudest acclaim;
Far and wide
The people cried,
All sorts of pleasure, and no sort of pain,
To Sir Thomas the good, and the fair Lady Jane!

Now, Sir Thomas the good, be it well understood,
Was a man of a very contemplative mood—
He would pore by the hour o'er a weed or a flower,
Or the slugs that came crawling out after a shower;
Black beetles, bumble-bees, bluebottle flies,
And moths were of no small account in his eyes;
An 'industrious flea' he 'd by no means despise,
While an 'old daddy-long-legs,' whose long legs and thighs
Passed the common in shape, or in colour, or size,
He was wont to consider an absolute prize.
Giving up, in short, both business and sport, he
Abandoned himself, *tout entier*, to philosophy.

Now, as Lady Jane was tall and slim,
And Lady Jane was fair,
And a good many years the junior of him,
There are some might be found entertaining a notion
That such an entire and exclusive devotion

To that part of science folks style entomology
Was a positive shame,
And, to such a fair dame,
Really demanded some sort of apology;
Ever poking his nose into this and to that—
At a gnat, or a bat, or a cat, or a rat;
At great ugly things, all legs and wings,
With nasty long tails, armed with nasty long stings;
And eternally thinking, and blinking, and winking
At grubs—when he ought of *her* to be thinking.
But no, ah no! 'twas by no means so
With the fair Lady Jane.
*Tout au contraire*, no lady so fair
Was e'er known to wear more contented an air;
And—let who would call—every day she was there,
Propounding receipts for some delicate fare,
Some toothsome conserve, of quince, apple, or pear;
Or distilling strong waters, or potting a hare;
Or counting her spoons and her crockery ware;
Enough to make less gifted visitors stare.

Nay, more; don't suppose
With such doings as those
This account of her merits must come to a close;
No!—examine her conduct more closely, you 'll find
She by no means neglected improving her mind;
For there all the while, with an air quite bewitching,
She sat herring-boning, tambouring, or stitching,
Or having an eye to affairs of the kitchen.
Close by her side
Sat her kinsman MacBride—
Captain Dugald MacBride, Royal Scots Fusiliers;
And I doubt if you 'd find, in the whole of his clan,
A more highly intelligent, worthy young man;
And there he 'd be sitting,
While she was a-knitting,
Reading aloud, with a very grave look,
Some very 'wise saw' from some very good book.

No matter who came,
It was always the same,
The Captain was reading aloud to the dame;
Till, from having gone through half the books on the shelf,
They were almost as wise as Sir Thomas himself.

Well, it happened one day—
I really can't say
The particular month, but I *think* 'twas in May;
'Twas, I *know*, in the spring-time, when 'nature looks gay,'
As the poet observes, and on tree-top and spray
The dear little dicky birds carol away—
That the whole of the house was thrown into affright
For no soul could conceive what was gone with the knight.

It seems he had taken
A light breakfast—bacon,
An egg, a little broiled haddock, at most
A round and a half of some hot buttered toast,
With a slice of cold sirloin from yesterday's roast.
But no matter for that—
He had called for his hat
With the brim that I 've said was so broad and so flat,
And his 'specs' with the tortoise-shell rim, and his cane
With the crutch-handled top, which he used to sustain
His steps in his walks, and to poke in the shrubs
And the grass when unearthing his worms and grubs.
Thus armed, he set out on a ramble—alack!
He *set out*, poor dear soul! but he never came back!

First dinner-bell rang
Out its euphonious clang
At five—folks kept early hours then—and the last
Ding-donged, as it ever was wont, at half-past.
Still the master was absent; the cook came and said he
Feared dinner would spoil, having been so long ready;
That the puddings her ladyship thought such a treat,
He was morally sure, would be scarce fit to eat!

Said the lady, 'Dish up! Let the meal be served straight,
And let two or three slices be put on a plate,
And kept hot for Sir Thomas.' Captain Dugald said grace,
Then sat himself down in Sir Thomas's place.

Wearily, wearily, all that night,
That livelong night, did the hours go by;
And the Lady Jane,
In grief and pain,
She sat herself down to cry!
And Captain MacBride,
Who sat by her side,
Though I really can't say that he actually cried,
At least had a tear in his eye!
As much as can well be expected, perhaps,
From 'very young fellows' for very 'old chaps.'
And if he had said
What he 'd got in his head,
'Twould have been, 'Poor old buffer, he 's certainly dead!'

The morning dawned, and the next, and the next,
And all in the mansion were still perplexed;
No knocker fell,
His approach to tell;
Not so much as a runaway ring at the bell.

Yet the sun shone bright upon tower and tree,
And the meads smiled green as green may be,
And the dear little dicky birds carolled with glee,
And the lambs in the park skipped merry and free.
Without, all was joy and harmony!

And thus 'twill be—nor long the day
Ere we, like him, shall pass away!
Yon sun, that now our bosom warms,
Shall shine—but shine on other forms;
Yon grove, whose choir so sweetly cheers
Us now, shall sound on other ears;

The joyous lamb, as now, shall play,
But other eyes its sports survey;
The stream we loved shall roll as fair;
The flowery sweets, the trim parterre,
Shall scent, as now, the ambient air;
The tree whose bending branches bear
The one loved name shall yet be there—
But where the hand that carved it? *Where?*

These were hinted to me as the very ideas
Which passed through the mind of the fair Lady Jane
As she walked on the esplanade to and again,
With Captain MacBride,
Of course, at her side,
Who could not look quite so forlorn—though he tried.
An 'idea,' in fact, had got into his head
That if 'poor dear Sir Thomas' should really be dead,
It might be no bad 'spec' to be there in his stead,
And by simply contriving, in due time, to wed
A lady who was young and fair,
A lady slim and tall,
To set himself down in comfort there,
The lord of Tapton Hall.

Thinks he, 'We have sent
Half over Kent,
And nobody knows how much money's been spent,
Yet no one's been found to say which way he went!
Here's a fortnight and more has gone by, and we've tried
Every plan we could hit on—and had him well cried,
'MISSING!! *Stolen or Strayed,*
*Lost or mislaid,*
A GENTLEMAN, middle-aged, sober and staid;
Stoops slightly, and when he left home was arrayed
In a sad-coloured suit, somewhat dingy and frayed;
Had spectacles on with a tortoise-shell rim,
And a hat rather low-crowned, and broad in the brim.
Whoe'er shall bear,
Or send him with care

(Right side uppermost), home; or shall give notice where
The said middle-aged GENTLEMAN is; or shall state
Any fact that may tend to throw light on his fate
To the man at the turnpike called *Tappington Gate*,
Shall receive a reward of five pounds for his trouble.
*N.B.*—If defunct, the reward will be double!'

'Had he been above ground,
He must have been found.
No; doubtless he 's shot, or he 's hanged, or he 's drowned!
Then his widow—ay! ay!
But what will folks say?
To address her at once, at so early a day!
Well—what then?—who cares? Let 'em say what they may.'

When a man has decided,
As Captain MacBride did,
And once fully made up his mind on the matter, he
Can't be too prompt in unmasking his battery.
He began on the instant, and vowed that her eyes
Far exceeded in brilliance the stars in the skies;
That her lips were like roses, her cheeks were like lilies.
Her breath had the odour of daffy-down-dillies!
With a thousand more compliments equally true,
Expressed in similitudes equally new!
Then his left arm he placed
Round her jimp, taper waist—
Ere she fixed to repulse or return his embrace,
Up came running a man at a deuce of a pace,
With that very peculiar expression of face
Which always betokens dismay or disaster,
Crying out—'twas the gard'ner—'Oh ma'am! we 've found master!'
'Where? where?' screamed the lady; and echo screamed 'Where?'
The man couldn't say 'There!'
He had no breath to spare,
But, gasping for breath, he could only respond
By pointing—he pointed, alas!—*to the pond.*

'Twas e'en so; poor dear knight, with his 'specs' and his hat,
He 'd gone poking his nose into this and to that;
When close to the side of the bank, he espied
An uncommon fine tadpole, remarkably fat!
He stooped—and he thought her
His own; he had caught her,
Got hold of her tail, and to land almost brought her,
When—he plumped head and heels into fifteen feet water!

The Lady Jane was tall and slim,
The Lady Jane was fair,
Alas for Sir Thomas!—she grieved for him
As she saw two serving-men, sturdy of limb,
His body between them bear.
She sobbed and she sighed, she lamented and cried,
For of sorrow brim-full was her cup;
She swooned, and I think she 'd have fallen down and died
If Captain MacBride
Hadn't been by her side
With the gard'ner;—they both their assistance supplied,
And managed to hold her up.
But when she 'comes to,'
Oh! 'tis shocking to view
The sight which the corpse reveals!
Sir Thomas's body,
It looked so odd—he
Was half-eaten up by the eels!
His waistcoat and hose,
And the rest of his clothes
Were all gnawned through and through;
And out of each shoe
An eel they drew;
And from each of his pockets they pulled out two!
And the gard'ner himself had secreted a few,
As well might be supposed he 'd do,
For, when he came running to give the alarm,
He had six in the basket that hung on his arm.

Good Father John was summoned anon;
Holy water was sprinkled and little bells tinkled,
And tapers were lighted,
And incense ignited,
And masses were sung, and masses were said,
All day, for the quiet repose of the dead,
And all night no one thought about going to bed.

But Lady Jane was tall and slim,
And Lady Jane was fair,
And ere morning came that winsome dame
Had made up her mind, or what's much the same—
Had *thought about* once more changing her name.
And she said, with a pensive air,
To Thompson, the valet, while taking away,
When supper was over, the cloth and the tray:
'Eels a many I've ate, but any
So good ne'er tasted before!
They're a fish, too, of which I'm remarkably fond—
Go—pop Sir Thomas again in the pond;
Poor dear!—*he'll catch us some more.*'

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## THE MODEL WOMAN.—ANON.

I know a woman wondrous fair—
A model woman she—
Who never runs her neighbours down
When she goes out to tea.

She never gossips after church
Of dresses or of hats;
She never meets the sewing school
And joins them in their chats.

She never beats a salesman down,
Nor asks for pretty plaques;
She never asks the thousand things
Which do his patience tax.

These statements may seem very strange—
At least they may to some;
But just remember this, my friends—
This woman 's deaf and dumb.

---

AWKWARD.—J. CHEEVER GOODWIN.

And so she 's engaged to be married
To one of our class! I 'm afraid
That if very much longer she tarried
Her degree would be O.M.—Old Maid.
I know her? Oh, yes, or I thought so;
But I 'm more than inclined to believe
I was wrong. I 'm the fellow she sought so,
But couldn't deceive.

You 're surprised? I imagined you would be;
It 's a thing I say little about;
'Twas as open a case as well could be—
Did she love me? There wasn't a doubt.
Why, she just threw herself at my head, Bill!
But I knew she 'd no heart and less brains;
And though money will settle a bread bill,
It won't wash off stains.

You 're astonished at this? My dear fellow,
What the deuce did I care for her age?
I like women like apples—when mellow.
But the fact was, I knew every page
Of her history. Flirted? You 'd think so.
There was Harry M'Keown, sixty-three;
It was she that drove him to the drink so;
Am I sure? As can be.

She 's a scheming coquette, and I know it;
She hasn't the least bit of soul
Or an atom of truth. Doesn't show it?
No; her feelings are under control.

Then it 's nonsense to say she has beauty;
I pity the fellow she 's caught.
It must be a matter of duty
With him, or he 's bought.

Who the deuce can it be? There 's Fred Baker;
You remember him?—scored for the Nine;
But there isn't much fear that he 'd take her;
He wants blue blood, and not a gold-mine.
'Chicken' Jones? No, he 's married. 'Twas funny
How he ran a tie race with Jim Prout
For the 'class cradle,' wasn't it? Money
He 's got, and the gout.

'Tub' Abbott was sweet on her. Sandy
M'Gillum!—he must be the one.
By Jove, it 's old 'Sandy the dandy!'
It 's not he? I give up, then. I 'm done.
*Is* it one of our class, are you sure,
That the vixen has seized for her prey?
Who 's the fellow? Let 's have it! What! *you are?*
The dickens you say!

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## JUPITER AND TEN.—James T. Fields.

Mrs Chub was rich and portly,
Mrs Chub was very grand,
Mrs Chub was always reckoned
A lady in the land.

You shall see her marble mansion
In a very stately square—
Mr C. knows what it cost him,
But that 's neither here nor there.

Mrs Chub was so sagacious,
Such a patron of the arts;
And she gave such foreign orders
That she won all foreign hearts.

Mrs Chub was always talking,
When she went away from home,
Of a most prodigious painting
Which had just arrived from Rome.

'Such a treasure,' she insisted,
'One might never see again!'
'What 's the subject?' we inquired,
'It is "Jupiter and Ten"!'

'Ten what?' we blandly asked her,
For the knowledge we did lack.
'Ah! that I cannot tell you,
But the name is on the back.

'There it stands in printed letters.
Come to-morrow, gentlemen,
Come and see our splendid painting,
Our fine "Jupiter and Ten."'

When Mrs Chub departed
Our brains we all did rack;
She could not be mistaken,
For the name was on the back.

So we begged a great professor
To lay aside his pen,
And give some information
Touching 'Jupiter and Ten.'

And we pondered well the subject,
And our Lemprière we turned,
To discover what the Ten were;
But we could not, though we burned!

But when we saw the picture,—
Oh, Mrs Chub! oh, fie! oh!
We perused the printed label,
And 'twas 'Jupiter and Io'!

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## DER VATER-MILL.—CHARLES F. ADAMS.

I reads aboudt dot vater-mill dot runs der lifelong day,
Und how der vater don'd coom pack vhen vonce id flows avay;
Und of der mill-shtream dot glides on so beacefully und shtill,
Budt don'd vas putting in more vork on dot same vater-mill.
Der boet says 'tvas beddher dot you holdt dis broverb fast,
'Der mill id don'd vould grind some more mit vater dot vas past.'

Dot boem id vas peautiful to read about; dot's so!
Budt eef dot vater *vasn't* past how could dot mill-vheel go?
Und vhy make drouble mit dot mill vhen id vas been inclined
To dake each obbordunidy dot's gifen id to grind?
Und vhen der vater cooms along in qvandidies so vast,
I 'd let some oder mill dake oup der vater dot vas past.

Dhen der boet shange der subject, und he dells us vonce again:
'Der sickle neffer more shall reap der yellow, garnered grain.'
Vell; vonce vas blendy, aind't id? Id vouldn't been so nice
To haf dot sickle reaping oup der same grain ofer, tvice!
Vhy, vot's der use of cutting oup der grass alreaty mown?
Id vas pest, mine moder dold me, to let vell enough alone.

'Der summer vinds refife no more leaves strewn o'er earth und main.'
Vell; who vants to refife dhem? Dhere vas blendy more again!
Der summer vinds dhey shtep righdt oup in goot time to brepare
Dhose blants und trees for oder leaves; dhere soon vas creen vones dhere.
Shust bear dis adverb on your mindts, mine friendts, und holdt id fast:
Der new leaves don'd vas been aroundt undil der oldt vas past.

Dhen neffer mindt der leaves dot 's dead, der grain dot 's in der bin;
Dhey both of dhem haf had dheir day, und shusht vas gathered in.
Und neffer mindt der vater vhen id vonce goes droo der mill;
Ids vork vas done! Dhere 's blendy more dot vaits ids blace to fill.
Let each von dake dis moral, vrom der king down to der peasant:
Don'd mindt der vater dot vas past, budt der vater dot vas bresent.

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## TIME TURNS THE TABLES.—ANON.

Ten years ago, when she was ten,
I used to tease and scold her;
I liked her and she loved me then—
A boy, some five years older.

I liked her; she would fetch my book,
Bring lunch to stream or thicket;
Would oil my gun and bait my hook,
And field for hours at cricket.

She 'd mend my cap or find my whip;
Ah! but boys' hearts are stony;
I liked her rather less than 'Gyp,'
And far less than my pony.

She loved me then, though Heaven knows why;
Small wonder she had hated;
For scores of dolls she had to cry,
Whom I decapitated.

I tore her frocks, I mussed her hair,
Called 'red' the sheen upon it;
Out fishing I would even dare
Catch tadpoles in her bonnet.

Well, now I expiate my crime;
The Nemesis of fables
Comes after years—to-day old Time
On me has turned the tables.

I 'm twenty-five: she 's twenty now,
Dark-eyed, fair-cheeked, and bonny;
The curls are golden round her brow—
She smiles and calls me 'Johnny.'

Of yore I used her Christian name,
But now, through fate or malice,
When she is by my lips can't frame
The letters that spell 'Alice.'

I, who could laugh at her and tease,
Stand silent now before her;
Dumb through the very wish to please,
A speechless, shy adorer.

Or, if she turns to me to speak,
I 'm dazzled by her graces;
The hot blood rushes to my cheek,
I babble commonplaces.

She 's kind and cool. Ah! Heaven knows how
I wish she blushed and faltered!
She likes me and I love her now.
Ah me! how things have altered!

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## A CHARMING WOMAN.—JOHN G. SAXE.

A charming woman! I 've heard it said
By other women as light as she;
But all in vain I puzzle my head
To find wherein the charm may be.
Her face, indeed, is pretty enough,
And her form is quite as good as the best—
Where Nature has given the bony stuff,
And a clever milliner all the rest.

Intelligent? Yes—in a certain way:
With the feminine gift of ready speech;
And knows very well what *not* to say
Whenever the theme transcends her reach.
But turn the topic on things to wear,
From an opera-cloak to a *robe de nuit*—
Hats, basques, or bonnets—'twill make you stare
To see how fluent the lady can be.

Her laugh is hardly a thing to please;
For an honest laugh must always start
From a gleesome mood, like a sudden breeze,
And hers is purely a matter of art—
A muscular motion made to show
What Nature designed to lie beneath
The finer mouth. But what can she do
If *that* is ruined to show the teeth?

To her seat in church—a good half-mile—
When the day is fine she is sure to go,
Arrayed, of course, in the latest style
*La mode de Paris* has got to show;
And she puts her hands on the velvet pew
(Can hands so white have a taint of sin?),
And thinks how her prayer-book's tint of blue
Must harmonise with her milky skin!

Ah! what shall we say of one who walks
In fields of flowers to choose the weeds?
Reads authors of whom she never talks,
And talks of authors she never reads?
She's a charming woman, I've heard it said
By other women as light as she;
But all in vain I puzzle my head
To find wherein the charm may be.

## THE COW AND THE BISHOP.—Townsend.

Once, in a good old college town,
Where learned doctors in cap and gown
Taught unfledged theologues how to preach—
Youths of many a land and speech—
There was a student, studious ever,
Whom Fellows and townsfolk counted clever;
Despite red hair and an awkward gait,
'He 'll be a great man,' they said; 'just wait!'

So it chanced, on a chill September day,
When the wind was sharp and the sky was gray,
This student, deep in a study brown,
Was striding along on the edge of the town.
A tiny cottage he neared and passed,
When the sound of footsteps approaching fast,
And his own name called, as in urgent need,
Made him abruptly slacken his speed.
As he turned, a woman had reached his side.

'Oh sir! you are learned and good,' she cried,
'And my cow is dying—my own cow Pink;
There 's nothing she 'll eat and nothing she 'll drink;
She seems to be moaning her life away.
Oh, lose not a moment, but come, I pray!'

'Good madam,' he said, with a puckered brow,
'My knowledge, I fear, would not help your cow.
On cattle diseases I 'm all unread—
You 'd better consult a physician instead.'

'Why, sir,' said the woman, with pleading eyes,
'They told me you were uncommonly wise,
And for hours I 've waited and watched for you,
In hopes you would pass, as you often do.'

So the student suffered himself to be led
To the poor old cow in the rickety shed.
And he thought, as he looked her carefully over,
'How I wish you were out among the clover!
But I must do something, right or wrong,
Better than all this talk prolong.'

Now, this quiet student loved a joke
As well as many merrier folk;
So, pausing a moment, as if in doubt,
He traced a circle the cow about,
Which thrice he reversed, with measured tread,
Stopping thrice at the creature's head,
While with solemn face, besuiting the time,
Thrice he intoned this impromptu rhyme:
'Here a suffering animal lies,
Faithful, trusty, and true;
If she lives, she lives,—if she dies, she dies;
And nothing more can I do.'

Then he said, in the tone of an ardent lover,
'I heartily trust this cow will recover!'
While the woman, watching with wide-open eyes
And awe-struck face, was dumb with surprise;
Till the student, with, 'Madam, a very good day!'
Was out of the shed, up the road, and away.

Had the woman heard the laugh ring out
When the story was told that night, no doubt
Her faith in the charm she would hardly have kept;
But, hearing naught, she believed and slept.

Years afterward in that same town
There lived a bishop of much renown;
Wise theologians spoke his fame,
And the little children loved his name.
But one sad day the bishop fell ill,
And the news spread abroad, as such news will;

One said to another, with tear or sigh,
'Nothing can save him—our bishop must die!'

In his sunlit chamber, smiling and calm
As a child unconscious of aught to harm,
The sufferer waited with heart of peace—
Patiently waited—for Death's release.

The fearful swelling that stopped his speech
The skill of the doctors could not reach,
And now it was sucking his breath away,
And the shadows were falling, still and gray.

Of a sudden a voice outside was heard,
And the sick man's memory strangely stirred
As a woman entered, bent and old,
Making her way with assurance bold.
She paused a moment, then, stooping low,
She marked a circle with finger slow
Across the carpet, around the bed,
From head to foot, and from foot to head;
And then in the circle she had traced
She hobbled around with eager haste.
And why, 'mid servitors strong and stout,
Did nobody venture to put her out?

Ah, why, no man of them ever could tell,
But each seemed holden as by a spell,
While the woman, in voice now high, now low,
Sang the student's rhyme of long ago:
'Here a suffering animal lies,
Faithful, trusty, and true;
If he lives, he lives,—if he dies, he dies;
And nothing more can I do!'
Then she piped, in the tone of an old cracked bell,
'I hope the bishop will now get well!'

But the words her lips had scarcely left
When the air with a quick, sharp cry was cleft;

It rang through the chamber, it rang through the hall;
Up sprang the attendants, one and all;
They stared at the sick man, perplexed, amazed—
Was the dying bishop suddenly crazed?
He laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks,
And, wonder of wonders—'He speaks! he speaks!'
Ah, the woman had reached with her charm and crutch
What the surgeon's lancet had failed to touch!
'The swelling is broken!' the doctors avowed
As they clustered together, a joyous crowd.

---

In a tiny cot on the edge of the town,
A little old woman, in kerchief and gown,
Recounts, for the hundredth time, the tale
Which never to her grows old or stale,
With many a flourish of withered arm,
Of the cow, and the bishop, and potent charm.
'To think,' she says to the aged crones,
'At last I can rest my poor old bones,
And never a thought to the future give,
But know that in plenty I ever shall live!
A wonderful man, you must allow;—
God bless the bishop, and my new cow!'

---

## LARRIE O'DEE.—W. W. Fink.

Now the widow M'Gee,
And Larrie O'Dee
Had two little cottages out on the green,
With just room enough for two pig-pens between.
The widow was young and the widow was fair,
With the brightest of eyes and the brownest of hair;
And it frequently chanced, when she came in the morn
With the swill for her pig, Larrie came with the corn.
And some of the ears that he tossed from his hand
In the pen of the widow were certain to land.

One morning said he:
'Och! Misthress M'Gee,
It 's a waste of good lumber, this runnin' two rigs,
Wid a fancy purtition betwane our two pigs!'
'Indade, sur, it is!' answered Widow M'Gee,
With the sweetest of smiles upon Larrie O'Dee.
'And thin, it looks kind o' hard-hearted and mane,
Kapin' two friendly pigs so exsaidenly near
That whiniver one grunts the other can hear,
And yit kape a cruel purtition betwane.'

'Shwate Widow M'Gee,'
Answered Larrie O'Dee,
'If ye fale in your heart we are mane to the pigs,
Ain't we mane to ourselves to be runnin' two rigs?
Och! it made me heart ache whin I paped through the cracks
Of me shanty, lasht March, at yez shwingin' yer axe,
An' a-bobbin' yer head an' a-shtampin' yer fate,
Wid yer purty white hands jisht as red as a bate,
A-shplittin' yer kindlin'-wood out in the shtorm,
When one little shtove it would kape us both warm!'

'Now, piggy,' said she,
'Larrie's courtin' o' me,
Wid his dilicate, tinder allusions to you;
So now yez must tell me jisht what I must do;
For, if I 'm to say yes, shtir the swill wid yer snout;
But if I 'm to say no, ye must kape your nose out.
Now, Larrie, for shame! to be bribin' a pig
By a-tossin' a handful of corn in its shwig!'
'Me darlint, the piggy says yes,' answered he.
And that was the courtship of Larrie O'Dee.

## THE BACHELOR SALE.—ANON.

I dreamed a dream in the midst of my slumbers,
And as fast as I dreamed it was coined into numbers;
My thoughts ran along in such beautiful metre,
I 'm sure I ne'er saw any poetry sweeter.

It seemed that a law had been recently made
That a tax on old bachelors' pates should be laid;
And, in order to make them all willing to marry,
The tax was as large as a man could well carry.

The bachelors grumbled, and said 'twas no use,
'Twas cruel injustice and horrid abuse;
And declared that to save their own hearts' blood from spilling,
Of such a vile tax they would ne'er pay a shilling.

But the rulers determined their scheme to pursue,
So they set all the bachelors up at vendue.

A crier was sent through the town to and fro,
To rattle his bell and his trumpet to blow,
And to bawl out to all he might meet on his way,
'Ho! forty old bachelors sold here to-day.'

And presently all the old maids of the town—
Each one in her very best bonnet and gown—
From thirty to sixty, fair, plain, red, and pale,
Of every description, all flocked to the sale.

The auctioneer then in his labour began,
And called out aloud as he held up a man,
'How much for a bachelor? Who wants to buy?'
In a twink every maiden responded, 'I—I!'

In short, at a hugely extravagant price,
The bachelors all were sold off in a trice,
And forty old maidens—some younger, some older—
Each lugged an old bachelor home on her shoulder.

## THE NEW WOMAN.—Tom Masson.

She warbled the soprano with dramatic sensibility,
And dallied with the organ when the organist was sick;
She got up for variety a brand-new church society,
And spoke with great facility about the new church brick.

She shed great tears of sorrow for the heathen immorality,
And organised a system that would open up their eyes;
In culinary clarity she won great popularity,
And showed her personality in lecturing on pies.

For real unvarnished culture she betrayed a great propensity;
Her Tuesday-talks were famous and her Friday-glimmers great;
She grasped at electricity with mental elasticity,
And lectured with intensity about the marriage state.

But with the calm assurance of her wonderful capacity,
She wouldn't wash the dishes, but she'd talk all day on rocks;
And while she dealt on density, or space and its immensity,
With such refined audacity, her mother darned the socks!

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## DAT FIRST SOOT.—J. Reddie Mallet.

Oh, dat first soot of trousers—dere vas sooch a fuss!—
Uncle Karl und Aunt Charlotte was shtaying by us;—
Und poor Grandpa sat up in his schair—he vas ill
Mit his legs full of gout—I remember it shtill!

Vell, der parcel came home late von Saturday night—
Lina vent to der door, Auntie turn'dt up der light;—
Fadther poot on his shpecks, Modther voke from her doze;
Und dey vaited to see how I fitted dem clo'es!

First I shlipp'dt on der trousers—all folded und new—
'Tvas some shtruggles, I tells you, mein legs to get thro';—

But der rest soon vas done, und I velt, in mein joy,
Shtout und bigger at vonce—quoite a different boy!

Den mein Fadther cried, 'Donner und Blitz—how he 's grown!
Shtand up shtraight—bendt your back—show your figure, mein sohn—
Poot your handts to your sides—look at me—now turn roundt—
Pull dem up more—your trousers vas touching der groundt!'

Den 'Come here,' saidt mein Modther, 'der vest looks too long—
Do keep shtill—vhy, goodt gracious—'tvas button'dt all wrong!—
You 've commenc'dt half-vay down—bless mein soul!—are you blindt?
Und your braces—I thought so—you 've cross'dt dem behind!'

Den she shtroked down mein jacket to see how it set—
Shpun me roundt like some tops; und I 'll never forget
How mein arms I heldt up; till she kiss'dt me for love,
Und cried, 'Shplendidt—it fits him so tight as a glove!'

Vell, next day vas der Sabbath—for schurch ve all dress'dt—
Fadther brought out dat hat he used only for best;—
Und I pleasedt Grandpa so, as I vasn't too late,
Dat a pfennig he gave me to poot in der plate.

How der peoples shtared roundt vhen ve enter'dt der door!—
Aunt vas proud in her silks—but dey 'd seen dem before;
Und her black bonnet, too;—vhat dey liked, I suppose,
Vas dat fine-looking boy in his new suit of clo'es!

Vhen dey pray'dt I said, 'Amen!' so grave as couldt be,
Und der preacher, I thought, shpoke his sermon to me;—
Vhilst I 'm sure I drove vild all der rest of der boys,
Vhen I dropp'dt in dat pfennig—it made sooch a noise!

So, dat first soot of trousers—der vas sooch a fuss—
Uncle Karl and Aunt Charlotte vas shtaying by us;—
Und poor Grandpa sat up in his schair—he vas ill
Mit his legs full of gout—I remember it shtill!

(By kind permission of the author and the Editor of *Temple Bar*.)

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## A LESSON IN TENNIS.—C. F. COBURN.

They played at tennis that summer day—
  Where was it? Oh, call it Mount Desert—
The place matters not; I will simply say
They were playing tennis that summer day,
  And she wore a short and stripèd skirt.

He played but ill—'twas his first essay—
  And she his partner and coach was both;
Though perhaps not 'up' in the points of play,
Yet she knew the game in a general way,
  And to give him points seemed nothing loath.

He did his best, but his best was poor;
  The balls served to him on his side stayed;
And thus it went on for a round or more,
Till, anxious, he ventured to ask the score!
  'The score? Why, it's thirty—love,' she said.

'And love? What is love?' he fain would know,
  Yet blushed to ask it, for he could see
What pardonless ignorance he must show;
But she calmly answered him, speaking slow,
  'Why, love is nothing, you know,' said she.

. . . . . .

The sun of that summer day is set;
  That season is gone, as seasons go;
But his heart was caught in that tennis-net,
And they might have been playing partners yet
  Had she not given her answer, 'No.'

He plays no tennis at all this year,
But he mopes and moans and sighs—heigh-ho!—
That fate is so hard and life is so drear;
And, worse than all else, he remembers clear
That 'love is nothing'—she told him so.

---

## FARMER STEBBINS AT FOOTBALL.—Will Carleton.

While walkin' up the village street, a fightin' there I see
Some twenty fellers, more or less, as fierce as fierce could be!
'Twas in a medder nigh to where the college late was built,
An' not a proper place for blood to be unduly spilt.
So, very peaceable inclined, an' al'ays actin' thus,
I thought, 'I 'll try what can be done to regulate the fuss.'

My goodness, how them fellers fit! They 'd punch each other there
Like hungry cattle when the frost is nibblin' through the air!
An' one would pick up somethin' quick, an' run off, fit to kill,
With several others chasin' him, as chickens sometimes will;
Then if he on his stomach fell, there right in his distress
They 'd pounce upon him hard an' square, a dozen, more or less.

An' when my eyes untangled 'em, an' glanced 'em through an' o'er,
To my surprise, I found I 'd seen full half of 'em before!
Young Caleb Stubbs, who once was raised across the road from me,
But I had never thought, before, would hurt an ailin' flea;
An' Joseph Minks, who 's al'ays fit whene'er he had a chance,
Was now as gay an' much at home as Frenchmen at a dance;

An' Thomas Tutts, who 's bein' taught so he himself can teach;
An' Samuel Strapp, who 's trainin' so 's to have a call to preach;
An' Peter Pills, who 'll some day strive to cure the world, no doubt,
Was strivin' hard, apparently, to kill an' wipe 'em out;

An' several others all appeared to do what death they could,
From whom I 'd al'ays looked for things a thousan' times as good.

An' what still deeper troubled me, a lot o' folks near by
Didn't seem to care to hold 'em back, an' wouldn't even try,
But sort o' toiled to help it on an' make a fightin' din ;
An' even girls would grit their teeth an' holler, ' Boys, go in ! '
An' then I says, ' Them fellers all appear in Death's employ ;
If there 's an undertaker here, he 's sheddin' tears of joy.'

An' terrified at what they 'd done, an' what they meant to do,
I struggled hard to recollect a Riot Act or two ;
But naught appeared that I could reach on Memory's cluttered shelf,
An' so I had, as one might say, to make one up myself.
I wildly rushed into their midst, an' yelled with all my might,
'See here, now, boys, this school wasn't built to teach you how to fight ! '

But still they all kept on their way, as fierce as fierce could be,
An' none of them was blessed with sense to listen unto me ;
But while I still upheld the right, in words I won't repeat,
Th' apparent cause of all their fuss rolled plump betwixt my feet !
An' then such buffetin' amidst the angry waves of strife
I never yet had come across in all my earthly life !

I 've sported in a skatin' rink, an' helped to dust the floor ;
I 've served as driftwood in the waves of Jersey's stormy shore ;
I 've clutched a tall toboggan slide, the while my cheek did blanch,
Then, lettin' go, reluctantly become an avalanche ;
I 've entered cars on Brooklyn Bridge 'twixt five and six o'clock,
But these was only zephyr breaths beside an earthquake shock !

They jumbled me, they tumbled me, some several fellers deep,
Until I gave up every sense an' feebly fell asleep ;
An' when I woke, and mildly asked if all my bones was there,
No one contiguous seemed to know, or specially to care ;
But several fellers, with their faces black an' blue an' red,
Jumped up an' down, a-wavin' han's an' shoutin', ' We 're ahead ! '

'Now, who's ahead?' says I, when I a listenin' ear could find.
'Whoever 'tis, here's one old fool that's several rods behind!
Why are you studyin' carnage here—what is this all about?'
An' then they hollered, 'Football, dad—we've gone and cleaned 'em out!'
Whereat I says, 'If this is what you call a friendly game,
Heaven shield me from your courtesies, an' help me dodge the same!'

Then everybody laughed an' joked, rejoicin' in the crimes,
An' said, 'Old man, the trouble is, you're 'way behind the times!'
An' then I said, 'All right! I'll keep behind 'em, if you please;
'Hind anything, to shield me from such goin's on as these;
An' when I'm anxious suddenly from this world to escape,
I'll go an' dance on dynamite, and do it up in shape.'

---

## MY RIVAL.—Bessie Chandler.

How I hate to see him there,
With his haughty, well-bred air,
At her side,
Looking with a scornful eye
At poor me, as I walk by
While they ride!

Well I know he is not worth,
Spite of all his pride of birth,
Such a favour;
And I think, as I advance,
Of that calculating glance
That he gave her.

Lady dear, he cares for naught
But the things which may be bought
With your pelf;

In his thoughts you have no part,
And his cold and sluggish heart
Beats for self.

Yet how glad I 'd be and gay
If you 'd treat me in that way
You treat him!
'Twould with heaven itself surround me,
And the sad old world around me
Would grow dim.

Ah, my lady, fair and sweet,
Will you tell me when we meet,
If it 's true
That your heart has grown so small
There is no room there at all
For me too?

Did she answer no, or yes?
She but gave him a caress,
Quite a hug;
And I stayed to see him courted,
For he is her fine, imported
English pug.

---

## RUSTIC COURTSHIP.—ANON.

The night was dark when Sam went out
To court old Jones's daughter;
He kinder felt as if he must,
And kinder hadn't oughter.
His heart against his waistcoat throbbed,
His feelings had a tussle,
Which nearly conquered him despite
Six feet of bone and muscle.

The candle in the window shone
With a most doleful glimmer,

And Sam he felt his courage ooze,
  And through his fingers simmer.
Says he: 'Now, Sam, don't be a fool;
  Take courage, shaking doubter;
Go on, and pop the question right,
  For you can't live without her.'

But still, as he drew near the house,
  His knees got in a tremble;
The beating of his heart ne'er beat
  His efforts to dissemble.
Says he: 'Now, Sam, don't be a goose,
  And let the female wimmin
Knock all your thoughts a-skelter so,
  And set your heart a-swimmin'.'

So Sam, he kinder raised the latch,
  His courage also raising,
And in a moment he sat inside,
  Cid Jones's crops a-praising.
He tried awhile to talk of farms
  In words half-dull, half-witty,
Not knowing that old Jones well knew
  His only thought was—Kitty.

At last the old folks went to bed—
  The Joneses were but human;
Old Jones was something of a man,
  And Mrs Jones—a woman.
And Kitty she the pitcher took,
  And started for the cellar;
It wasn't often that she had
  So promising a feller.

And somehow when she came upstairs,
  And Sam had drunk his cider,
There seemed a difference in the chairs,
  And Sam was close beside her;

His stalwart arm dropped round her waist,
  Her head dropped on his shoulder;
And Sam—well, he had changed his tune
  And grown a trifle bolder.

But this, if you live long enough,
  You surely will discover—
There 's nothing in this world of ours
  Except the loved and lover.
The morning sky was growing gray
  As Sam the farm was leaving;
His face was surely not the face
  Of one half-grieved or grieving.

And Kitty, she walked smiling back
  With blushing face, and slowly;
There 's something in the humblest love
  That makes it pure and holy.
'And did he marry her?' you ask.
  She stands there with the ladle
A-skimming of the morning's milk—
  That 's Sam who rocks the cradle.

---

## THE COMET.—Thomas Hood.

Among professors of astronomy,
Adepts in the celestial economy,
  The name of Herschel 's very often cited;
    And justly so, for he is hand-in-glove
    With every bright intelligence above;
    Indeed, it was his custom so to stop,
    Watching the stars, upon the house's top,
  That once upon a time he got benighted

In his observatory thus coquetting
  With Venus or with Juno, gone astray,
All sublunary matters quite forgetting
In his flirtations with the winking stars,

Acting the spy, it might be, upon Mars—
A new André;
Or, like a Tom of Coventry, sly peeping
At Dian sleeping;
Or ogling through his glass
Some heavenly lass,
Tripping with pails along the Milky Way;
Or looking at that wain of Charles the Martyr's.
Thus was he sitting, watchman of the sky,
When lo! a something with a tail of flame
Made him exclaim,
'*My* stars!'—he always put that stress on *my*—
'*My* stars and garters!

'A comet, sure as I 'm alive!
A noble one as I should wish to view;
It can't be Halley's, though; *that* is not due
Till eighteen thirty-five.
Magnificent! How fine his fiery trail!
Zounds! 'tis a pity, though, he comes unsought,
Unasked, unreckoned—in no human thought;
He ought—he ought—he ought
To have been caught
With scientific salt upon his tail.

'I looked no more for it, I do declare,
Than the Great Bear!
As sure as Tycho Brahé is dead,
It really entered in my head
No more than Berenice's hair!'
Thus musing, heaven's grand inquisitor
Sat gazing on the uninvited visitor,
Till John, the serving-man, came to the upper
Regions, with 'Please your honour, come to supper.'

'Supper! Good John, to-night I shall not sup,
Except on that phenomenon—look up.'
'Not sup!' cried John, thinking with consternation
That supping on a *star* must be *star*-vation,

Or even to batten
On *ignes fatui* would never fatten.
His visage seemed to say, 'That very odd is;'
  But still his master the same tune ran on:
  'I can't come down; go to the parlour, John,
And say I 'm supping with the heavenly bodies.'

'The heavenly bodies!' echoed John—'ahem!'
  His mind still full of famishing alarms.
'Zounds! If your honour sups with *them*,
  In helping, somebody must make long arms.'
He thought his master's stomach was in danger;
  But still in the same tone replied the knight,
  'Go down, John, go; I have no appetite.
Say I 'm engaged with a celestial stranger.'
Quoth John, not much *au fait* in such affairs,
'Wouldn't the stranger take a bit downstairs?'

'No,' said the master, smiling, and no wonder,
At such a blunder;
'The stranger is not quite the thing you think;
He wants no meat or drink;
And one may doubt quite reasonably whether
  He has a mouth,
Seeing his head and tail are joined together.
  Behold him! There he is, John, in the south.'
John looked up with his portentous eyes,
  Each rolling like a marble in its socket;
At last the fiery tadpole spies,
And, full of Vauxhall reminiscence, cries,
  'A rare good rocket!'

'A what? A rocket, John! Far from it!
What you behold, John, is a comet;
One of those most eccentric things
  That in all ages
  Have puzzled sages
And frightened kings;

With fear of change, that flaming meteor, John,
  Perplexes sovereigns throughout its range.'
'Do he?' cried John.
'Well, let him flare on,
  *I* haven't got no sovereigns to change!'

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## A SIMILAR CASE.—ANON.

'Jack, I hear you 've gone and done it.
  Yes, I know; most fellows will.
Went and tried it once myself, sir,
  Though, you see, I 'm single still.
    And you met her—did you tell me?—
      Down at Newport last July,
    And resolved to ask the question
      At a soirée? So did I.

'I suppose you left the ballroom,
  With its music and its light;
For they say love's flame is brightest
  In the darkness of the night.
    Well, you walked along together—
      Overhead the starlit sky,
    And I 'll bet—old man, confess it—
      You were frightened. So was I.

'So you strolled along the terrace,
  Saw the summer moonlight pour
All its radiance on the waters
  As they rippled on the shore;
    Till at length you gathered courage,
      When you saw that none were nigh—
    Did you draw her close and tell her
      That you loved her? So did I.

'Well, I needn't ask you further,
And I 'm sure I wish you joy;
Think I 'll wander down and see you
When you 're married—eh, my boy?
When the honeymoon is over,
And you 're settled down, we 'll try—
What? The deuce you say! Rejected?
You rejected? So was I.'

---

## PADDY'S EXCELSIOR.—ANON.

'Twas growing dark so terrible fasht,
Whin through a town up the mountain there pashed
A broth of a boy, to his neck in the shnow;
As he walked, his shillalah he swung to and fro,
Saying, 'It 's up till the top I 'm bound for to go,
Be jabers!'

He looked mortial sad, and his eye was as bright
As a fire of turf on a cowld winther night,
And niver a word that he said could ye tell
As he opened his mouth and let out a yell:
'It 's up till the top of the mountain I 'll go,
*Onless* covered up wid this bothersome shnow,
Be jabers!'

Through the windows he saw, as he thravelled along,
The light of the candles and fires so warm;
But a big chunk of ice hung over his head.
Wid a shnivel and groan, 'By St Patrick!' he said,
'It 's up till the very *tip-top* I will rush,
And then if it falls, it 's not meself it 'll crush,
Be jabers!'

'Whisht a bit,' said an owld man, whose head was as white
As the shnow that fell down on that miserable night;

'Shure, ye 'll fall in the wather, me bit of a lad,
For the night is so dark and the walkin' is bad.'
But, shure, he 'd not lisht to a word that was said,
For he 'd go till the top, if he wint on his head,
Be jabers!

A bright, buxom young girl, such as liked to be kissed,
Axed him wadn't he shtop, and how *could* he resist?
So, shnapping his fingers and winking his eye,
While shmiling upon her, he made this reply:
'Faith, I meant to kape on till I got to the top,
But, as yer shwate self has axed me, I may as well shtop,
Be jabers!'

He shtopped all night and he shtopped all day,
And ye mustn't be axin' whin he *did* go away;
For wadn't he be a bastely gossoon
To be lavin' his darlint in the shwate honeymoon?
Whin the owld man has praties enough, and to spare,
Shure he moight as well shtay if he 's comfortable there,
Be jabers!

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## A GIRL OF THE PERIOD.—ANON.

Oh! she was so utterly utter,
She couldn't eat plain bread and butter,
But a nibble she 'd take
At a wafer of cake
Or the wing of a quail for her supper.
Roast beef and plum-pudding she 'd sneer at,
A boiled leg of mutton she 'd jeer at,
But the limb of a frog
Might her appetite jog,
Or some delicate bit that came near that.
The consequence was, she grew paler
And more wishy-washy, and frailer,

Ate less for her dinner,
Grew thinner and thinner,
Till I really think,
If you marked her with ink,
Put an envelope on her,
And stamped it upon her,
You could go to the office and mail her!
Her voice was so low and so thrilling,
Its cadence was perfectly killing;
And she talked with a lisp and a stutter,
For she was so utterly utter!

Oh, she was so very æsthetic!
Her face was quite long and pathetic;
The ends of her hair
Floated loose on the air,
And her eyes had a sadness prophetic;
The bangs she wore down on her forehead
Were straight and deliciously horrid;
And a sad-coloured gown
Going straight up and down
She wore when the weather was torrid.
It was terribly hard to enthuse her,
But a bit of old china would fuse her;
And she'd glow like a coal or a candle
At the mention of Bach or of Handel.
At pinks and sweet-williams and roses
She'd make the most *retroussé* noses,
But would swoon with delight
At a sunflower bright,
And use it in making her poses.
She moved with the sleepiest motion,
As if not quite used to the notion;
And her manner was chill
As a waterfowl's bill
When he's fresh from a dip in the ocean!
It was quite the reverse of magnetic,
But, oh, it was very æsthetic!

And if, with your old-fashioned notions,
You could wish that more cheerful emotions,
More sunshine and grace,
Should appear in her face,
More gladness should speak in her motions—
If you heard with a home-sick dejection
The changes in voice and inflection,
And sighed for smooth tresses
And the plain, simple dresses
That used to command your affection,—
Oh, hide your rash thoughts in your bosom!
Or, if you must speak out and use 'em,
Then under your breath you must mutter,
For she is too utterly utter!

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## THE STETHOSCOPE SONG.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

There was a young man in Boston town,
He bought him a stethoscope nice and new,
All mounted and finished and polished down,
With an ivory cap and a stopper too.

It happened a spider within did crawl,
And spun him a web of ample size,
Wherein there chanced one day to fall
A couple of very imprudent flies.

The first was a bottle-fly, big and blue,
The second was smaller, and thin and long;
So there was a concert between the two,
Like an octave flute and a tavern gong.

Now, being from Paris but recently,
This fine young man would show his skill;
And so they gave him, his hand to try,
A hospital patient extremely ill.

Some said that his *liver* was short of *bile*,
And some that his *heart* was over size,
While some kept arguing all the while
He was crammed with *tubercles* up to his eyes.

This fine young man then up stepped he,
And all the doctors made a pause;
Said he, 'The man must die, you see,
By the fifty-seventh of Louis's laws.

'But since the case is a desperate one,
To explore his chest it may be well;
For if he should die, and it were not done,
You know the *autopsy* would not tell.'

Then out his stethoscope he took,
And on it placed his curious ear.
'*Mon Dieu!*' said he, with a knowing look,
'Why, here is a sound that 's mighty queer!

'The *bourdonnement* is very clear—
*Amphoric buzzing*, as I 'm alive!'
Five doctors took their turn to hear;
'*Amphoric buzzing*,' said all the five.

'There 's *empyema*, beyond a doubt;
We 'll plunge a *trocar* in his side.'
The diagnosis was made out,
They tapped the patient; so he died.

Now, such as hate new-fashioned toys
Began to look extremely glum;
They said that *rattles* were made for boys,
And vowed that his *buzzing* was all a hum.

There was an old lady had long been sick,
And what was the matter none did know:
Her pulse was slow, though her tongue was quick,
To her this knowing youth must go.

So there the nice old lady sat,
With phials and boxes all in a row;
She asked the young doctor what he was at,
To thump her and tumble her ruffles so.

Now, when the stethoscope came out,
The flies began to buzz and whiz.
Oh ho! the matter is clear, no doubt;
An *aneurism* there plainly is.

The *bruit de râpe* and the *bruit de scie*
And the *bruit de diable* are all combined:
How happy Bouillaud would be,
If he a case like this could find!

Now, when the neighbouring doctors found
A case so rare had been descried,
They every day her ribs did pound
In squads of twenty; so she died.

Then six young damsels, slight and frail,
Received this kind young doctor's cares;
They all were getting slim and pale,
And short of breath on mounting stairs.

They all made rhymes with 'sighs' and 'skies,'
And loathed their puddings and buttered rolls,
And dieted, much to their friends' surprise,
On pickles and pencils and chalk and coals.

So fast their little hearts did bound,
The frightened insects buzzed the more;
So over all their chests he found
The *râle sifflant* and the *râle sonore.*

He shook his head: 'There 's grave disease—
I greatly fear you all must die;
A slight *post-mortem*, if you please,
Surviving friends would gratify.'

The six young damsels wept aloud,
  Which so prevailed on six young men
That each his honest love avowed,
  Whereat they all got well again.

This poor young man was all aghast;
  The price of stethoscopes came down;
And so he was reduced at last
  To practise in a country town.

The doctors being very sore,
  A stethoscope they did devise
That had a rammer to clear the bore,
  With a knob at the end to kill the flies.

Now use your ears, all you that can,
  But don't forget to mind your eyes,
Or you may be cheated, like this young man,
  By a couple of silly, abnormal flies.

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## THE OWL CRITIC.—J. T. Fields.

'Who stuffed that white Owl?' No one spoke in the shop:
The Barber was busy, and he couldn't stop;
The customers, waiting their turns, were all reading
The *Times*, *Telegraph*, *Daily News*, little heeding
The young man who blurted out such a blunt question.
Not one raised a head, or even made a suggestion;
  And the Barber kept on shaving.

'Don't you see, Mister Brown,'
Cried the youth, with a frown,
'How wrong the whole thing is—
How preposterous each wing is—
How flattened the head is, how jammed down the neck is—
In short, the whole Owl, what an ignorant wreck 'tis!

I make no apology—
I 've learned owl-eology—
I 've passed days and nights in a hundred collections,
And cannot be blinded to any deflections
Arising from unskilful fingers that fail
To stuff a bird right, from his beak to his tail.
Mister Brown! Mister Brown!
Do take that bird down,
Or you 'll soon be the laughing-stock all over town!'
And the Barber kept on shaving.

'I 've *studied* Owls,
And other night fowls,
And I tell you
What I know to be true:
An Owl cannot roost
With his limbs so unloosed;
No Owl in this world
Ever had his claws curled,
Ever had his legs slanted,
Ever had his bill canted,
Ever had his neck screwed
Into that attitude.
He can't *do* it, because
'Tis against all bird laws.
Anatomy teaches,
Ornithology preaches,
An Owl has a toe
That *can't* turn out so!
I 've made the white Owl my study for years,
And to see such a job almost moves me to tears!
Mister Brown, I 'm amazed
You should be so gone crazed
As to put up a bird
In that posture absurd!
To *look* at that Owl really brings on a dizziness;
The man who stuffed him don't half know his business!'
And the Barber kept on shaving.

'Examine those eyes.
I 'm filled with surprise
Taxidermists should pass
Off on you such poor glass;
So unnatural they seem
They 'd make an Audubon scream,
And John Burroughs laugh
To encounter such chaff.
Do take that bird down;
Have him stuffed again, Brown!'
And the Barber kept on shaving.

'With some sawdust and bark
I could stuff in the dark
An Owl better than that.
I could make an old hat
Look more like an Owl
Than that horrid fowl—
Stuck up there so stiff, like a side of coarse leather.
In fact, about *him* there 's not one natural feather.'

Just then, with a wink and a sly normal lurch,
The Owl, very gravely, got down from his perch,
Walked round, and regarded his fault-finding Critic
(Who thought he was stuffed) with a glance analytic,
And then fairly hooted, as if he should say,
'Your learning 's at fault this time, any way;
Don't waste it again on a live bird, I pray.
I 'm an Owl; you 're another, Sir Critic. Good-day!'
And the Barber kept on shaving.

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## THE BALLAD OF CHARITY.—Charles G. Leland.

It was in a pleasant deepô, sequestered from the rain,
That many weary passengers were waitin' for the train,
Piles of quite expensive baggage, many a gorgeous portmantó,
Ivory-handled umberellas made a most touristic show.

Whereunto there came a person, very humble was his mien,
Who took an observation of the interestin' scene;
Closely scanned the umberellas, watched with joy the mighty trunks,
And observed that all the people were securin' Pullman bunks:

Who was followed shortly after by a most unhappy tramp,
Upon whose features poverty had jounced her iron stamp;
And to make a clear impression, as bees sting you while they buzz,
She had hit him rather harder than she generally does.

For he was so awful ragged, and in parts so awful bare,
That the folks were quite repulsioned to behold him begging there;
And instead of drawing currency from out their pocket-books,
They drew themselves asunder with aversionary looks.

Sternly gazed the first new-comer on the unindulgent crowd,
Then in tones which pierced the deepô he solilicussed aloud:
'I hev travelled o'er this cont'nent from Quebec to Bogotáw,
But setch a set of scallawags as these I never saw.

'Ye are wealthy, ye are gifted, ye have house and lands and rent,
Yet unto a suff'rin' mortal ye will not donate a cent;
Ye expend your missionaries to the heathen and the Jew,
But there isn't any heathen that is half as small as you.

'Ye are lucky—ye hev cheque-books and deeposits in the bank,
And ye squanderate your money on the titled folks of rank;
The onyx and the sardonyx upon your garments shine,
An' ye drink at every dinner p'r'aps a dollar's wuth of wine.

'Ye are goin' for the summer to the islands by the sea,
Where it costs four dollars daily—setch is not for setch as me;
Iv'ry-handled umberellers do not come into my plan,
But I kin give a dollar to this suff'rin' fellow-man.

'Hand-bags made of Rooshy leather are not truly at my call,
Yet in the eyes of Mussy I am richer 'en you all,
For I kin give a dollar wher' you dare not stand a dime,
And never miss it nother, nor regret it ary time.'

Sayin' this, he drew a wallet from the inner of his vest,
And gave the tramp a daddy, which it was his level best;
Other people, havin' heard him, soon to charity inclined—
One giver soon makes twenty if you only get their wind.

The first who gave the dollar led the other one about,
And at every contribution he a-raised a joyful shout,
Exclaimin' how 'twas noble to relieviate distress,
And remarkin' that our duty is our present happiness.

Thirty dollars altogether were collected by the tramp,
When he bid 'em all good-evenin' and went out into the damp,
And was followed briefly after by the one who made the speech,
And who showed by good example how to practise as to preach.

Which soon around the corner the couple quickly met,
And the tramp produced the specie for to liquidate his debt;
And the man who did the preachin' took his twenty of the sum,
Which you see that out of thirty left a tenner for the bum.

And the couple passed the summer at Bar Harbour with the rest,
Suckin' juleps, playin' poker, and most elegantly dressed;
Suckin' juleps, playin' poker, layin' round in love and rum—
Oh, how hard is life for many! Oh, how sweet it is for some!

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## WHAT'S IN A NAME.—R. K. MUNKITTRICK.

In letters large upon the frame,
That visitors might see,
The painter placed his humble name,
*O'Callaghan M'Gee.*

And from Beërsheba to Dan,
The critics, with a nod,
Exclaimed, 'This painting Irishman
Adores his native sod.

'His stout heart's patriotic flame
There's naught on earth can quell;
He takes no wild romantic name
To make his pictures sell!'

Then poets praised in sonnets neat
His stroke so bold and free;
No parlour wall was thought complete
That hadn't a M'Gee.

All patriots before M'Gee
Threw lavishly their gold;
His works in the Academy
Were very quickly sold.

His 'Digging Clams at Barnegat,'
His 'When the Morning Smiled,'
His 'Seven Miles from Ararat,'
His 'Portrait of a Child,'

Were purchased in a single day
And lauded as divine.
. . . .
That night, as in his *atelier*
The artist sipped his wine,

And looked upon his gilded frames,
He grinned from ear to ear:—
'They little think my real name's
V. Stuyvesant De Vere!'

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## THE AMATEUR ORLANDO.—GEORGE T. LANIGAN.

It was an Amateur Dram. Ass.
(Kind reader, although your
Knowledge of French is not first class,
Don't call that Amature)—

It was an Amateur Dram. Ass.,
The which did warfare wage
On the dramatic works of this
And every other age.

It had a walking gentleman,
A leading juvenile,
First lady in book-muslin dressed,
With a galvanic smile;
Thereto a singing chambermaid,
Benignant heavy pa,
And, oh! heavier still was the heavier vill-
Ain, with his fierce 'Ha! ha!'

There wasn't an author from Shakespeare down—
Or up—to Boucicault
These amateurs weren't competent
(S. Wegg) to collar and throw;
And when the winter-time came round—
'Season' 's a stagier phrase—
The Am. Dram. Ass. assaulted one
Of the Bard of Avon's plays.

'Twas *As You Like It* that they chose;
For the leading lady's heart
Was set on playing *Rosalind*
Or some other page's part;
And the President of the Am. Dram. Ass.,
A stalwart dry-goods clerk,
Was cast for *Orlando*, in which *rôle*
He felt he 'd make his mark.

'I mind me,' said the President
(All thoughtful was his face)
'When *Orlando* was taken by Thingummy
That *Charles* was played by Mace.
*Charles* hath not many lines to speak,
Nay, not a single length—

Oh, if find we can a Mussulman
(That is, a man of strength),
And bring him on the stage as *Charles*—
But, alas! it can't be did'——
'It can,' replied the Treasurer;
'Let's get the Hunky Kid.'

This Hunky Kid of whom they spoke
Belonged to the P.R.;
He always had his hair cut short,
And always had catarrh.
His voice was gruff, his language rough,
His forehead villainous low,
And 'neath his broken nose a vast
Expanse of jaw did show.
He was forty-eight about the chest,
And his forearm at the mid-
Dle measured twenty-one and a half—
Such was the Hunky Kid!

The Am. Dram. Ass. they have engaged
This pet of the P.R.;
As *Charles the Wrestler* he's to be
A bright particular star.
And when they put the programme out,
Announce him thus they did:
*Orlando* - - - Mr Romeo Jones;
*Charles* - - - Mr T. H. Kid.

The night has come; the house is packed
From pit to gallery,
As those who through the curtain peep
Quake inwardly to see.
A squeak's heard in the orchestra,
As the leader draws across
Th' intestines of the agile cat
The tail of the noble hoss.

All is at sea behind the scenes—
  Why do they fear and funk?
Alas, alas, the Hunky Kid
  Is lamentably drunk!
He 's in that most unlovely stage
  Of half-intoxication
When men resent the hint they 're tight
  As a personal imputation!

'Ring up! ring up!' *Orlando* cried,
  'Or we must cut the scene;
For *Charles the Wrestler* is imbued
  With poisonous benzine,
And every moment gets more drunk
  Than he before has been.
The wrestling scene has come, and *Charles*
  Is much disguised in drink;
The stage to him 's an inclined plane,
  The footlights make him blink.

Still strives he to act well his part
  Where all the honour lies,
Though Shakespeare would not in his lines
  His language recognise.
Instead of 'Come, where is this young—— ?'
  This man of bone and brawn,
He squares himself and bellows, 'Time!
  Fetch your *Orlandos* on!'

'Now, Hercules be thy speed, young man,'
  Fair *Rosalind* said she,
As the two wrestlers in the ring
  Grapple right furiously;
But *Charles the Wrestler* had no sense
  Of dramatic propriety.

He seized on Mr Romeo Jones
  In Græco-Roman style;

He got what they call a grape-vine lock
On that leading juvenile;
He flung him into the orchestra;
And the man with the ophicleide,
On whom he fell, he just said—well,
No matter what—and died!

When once the tiger has tasted blood,
And found that it is sweet,
He has a habit of killing more
Than he can possibly eat.

And thus it was with the Hunky Kid,
In his homicidal blindness,
He lifted his hand against *Rosalind*
Not in the way of kindness;
He chased poor *Celia* off at L.,
At R.U.E. *Le Beau*,
And he put such a head upon *Duke Fred*,
In fifteen seconds or so,
That never one of the courtly train
Might his haughty master know.

. . . . . .

And that's precisely what came to pass
Because the luckless carles
Belonging to the Am. Dram. Ass.
Cast the Hunky Kid for *Charles!*

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## 'HERE SHE GOES—AND THERE SHE GOES.'

JAMES NACK.

Two Yankee wags, one summer day,
Stopped at a tavern on their way;
Supped, frolicked, late retired to rest,
And woke to breakfast on the best.

The breakfast over, Tom and Will
Sent for the landlord and the bill;
Will looked it over: 'Very right—
But hold! what wonder meets my sight?
Tom! the surprise is quite a shock!'
'What wonder? where?' 'The clock! the clock!'
Tom and the landlord in amaze
Stared at the clock with stupid gaze,
And for a moment neither spoke.
At last the landlord silence broke:

'You mean the clock that 's ticking there?
I see no wonder, I declare;
Though maybe, if the truth were told,
'Tis rather ugly—somewhat old;
Yet time it keeps to half-a-minute.
But, if you please, what wonder 's in it?'

'Tom, don't you recollect,' said Will,
'The clock in Jersey near the mill,
The very image of this present,
With which I won the wager pleasant?'
Will ended with a knowing wink.
Tom scratched his head and tried to think.
'Sir, begging pardon for inquiring,'
The landlord said, with grin admiring,
'What wager was it?'

'You remember,
It happened, Tom, in last December,
In sport I bet a pound or two
That it was more than he could do
To make his finger go and come
In keeping with the pendulum,
Repeating, till one hour should close,
Still, "Here she goes—and there she goes."
He lost the bet in half-a-minute.'
'Well, if I would, the deuce is in it!'

Exclaimed the landlord; 'try me yet,
And twenty pounds shall be the bet.'
'Agreed; but we will play some trick
To make you of the bargain sick!'

'I'm up to that!'
'Don't make us wait;
Begin; the clock is striking eight.'
He seats himself, and left and right
His finger wags with all his might,
And hoarse his voice, and hoarser grows,
With 'Here she goes—and there she goes!'

'Hold,' said the Yankee; 'plank the ready!'
The landlord wagged his finger steady
While his left hand, as well as able,
Conveyed a purse upon the table.

'Tom, with the money let 's be off!'
This made the landlord only scoff;
He heard them running down the stair,
But was not tempted from his chair.
Thought he, 'The fools, I'll bite them yet!
So poor a trick shan't win the bet.'
And loud and loud the chorus rose
Of 'Here she goes—and there she goes!'
While right and left his finger swung,
In keeping to his clock and tongue.

His mother happened in to see
Her daughter: 'Where is Mrs B——?
When will she come, as you suppose?
Son!'
'Here she goes—and there she goes!'

'Here! Where?'—the lady in surprise
His finger followed with her eyes;
'Son, why that steady gaze and sad?
Those words—that motion—are you mad?

But here 's your wife—perhaps she knows,
And '——
'Here she goes—and there she goes!'

His wife surveyed him with alarm,
And rushed to him and seized his arm;
He shook her off, and to and fro
His finger persevered to go,
While curled his very nose with ire
That she against him should conspire,
And with more furious tone arose
The 'Here she goes—and there she goes!'

'Lawks!' screamed the wife, 'I 'm in a whirl!
Run down and bring the little girl;
She is his darling, and who knows
But '——
'Here she goes—and there she goes!'

'Lawks! he is mad! What made him thus?
Good lack! what will become of us?
Run for a doctor—run—run—run—
For Doctor Brown, and Doctor Dun,
And Doctor Black, and Doctor White,
And Doctor Gray, with all your might.'

The doctors came and looked and wondered,
And shook their heads, and paused and pondered,
Till one proposed he should be bled.
'No—leeched, you mean,' the other said.
'Clap on a blister,' roared another.
'No—cup him.' 'No—trepan him, brother!'
A sixth would recommend a purge;
The next would an emetic urge;
The eighth, just come from a dissection,
His verdict gave for an injection;
The last produced a box of pills,
A certain cure for earthly ills.

'I had a patient yesternight,'
Quoth he, 'and wretched was her plight;
And as the only means to save her,
Three dozen patent pills I gave her;
And by to-morrow, I suppose
That'——
'Here she goes—and there she goes!'

'You all are fools,' the lady said;
'The way is just to shave his head.
Run, bid the barber come anon.'
'Thanks, mother,' thought her clever son;
'*You* help the knaves that would have bit me,
But all creation shan't outwit me!'
Thus to himself, while to and fro
His finger perseveres to go,
And from his lips no accent flows
But 'Here she goes—and there she goes!'

The barber came: 'Lord help him! what
A curious customer I've got!
But we must do our best to save him—
So hold him, gemmen, while I shave him!'
But here the doctors interpose—
'A woman never'——
'There she goes!'

'A woman is no judge of physic,
Not even when her baby is sick.
He must be bled.' 'No—no—a blister.'
'A purge you mean.' 'I say a clyster.'
'No—cup him.' 'Leech him.' 'Pills! pills! pills.'
And all the house the uproar fills.

What means that smile? What means that shiver?
The landlord's limbs with rapture quiver,
And triumph brightens up his face—
His finger yet shall win the race!

The clock is on the strike of nine,
And up he starts—''Tis mine! 'tis mine!'

'What do you mean?'
'I mean the twenty!
I never spent an hour so thrifty;
But you, who tried to make me lose,
Go, burst with envy if you choose!
But how is this! Where are they?'
'Who?'
'The gentlemen—I mean the two
Came yesterday—are they below?'
'They galloped off an hour ago.'
'Oh, purge me! blister! shave and bleed!
For, hang the knaves, I 'm mad indeed!'

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## SHADOWS.—ANON.

Yes; I own I start at shadows;
Listen—I will tell you why
(Life itself is but a taper,
Casting shadows till we die).

Once in Italy, at Florence,
I a radiant girl adored;
When she came, she saw, she conquered;
And by Cupid I was floored.

'Mia cara Mandolina!
Are we not indeed,' I cried,
'All the world to one another?'
Mandolina smiled and sighed.

Earth was Eden—she an angel—
I a Jupiter enshrined,
Till one night I saw a fatal
Double shadow on the blind.

Fire and fury! Double shadows
On their window curtains ne'er
To my knowledge have been cast by
Ladies virtuous as fair.

False and fickle Mandolina!
Fare thee well for evermore.
'Vengeance,' shrieked I, 'vengeance, vengeance!'
And I thundered at the door.

This event occurred next morning:
Mandolina staring sat,
Stark-amazed, as out I stumbled,
Raving mad, without a hat.

Six weeks after I 'd a letter,
On its road six weeks delayed,
With a dozen redirections,
From the lost one; and it said:

'Foolish, wicked, cruel Albert!
Base, suspicious doubt resign.
Double lights throw double shadows.—
Mandolina, ever thine.'

'Heavens, what an ass!' I muttered,
'Not before to think of that.'
And again I rushed excited
To the rail without my hat.

'Mandolina! Mandolina!'
Rushing to her house, I cried.
'Pardon, dearest A.,' she answered;
'I 'm the Russian Consul's bride.'

## HALF-AN-HOUR BEFORE SUPPER.—Bret Harte.

'So she's here, your unknown Dulcinea—the lady you met on the train;
And you really believe she would know you if you were to meet her again?'

'Of course,' he replied, 'she would know me; there never was womankind yet
Forgot the effect she inspired; she excuses, but does not forget.'

'Then you told her your love?' asked the elder. The younger looked up with a smile:
'I sat by her side half-an-hour; what else was I doing the while?

'What! sit by the side of a woman as fair as the sun in the sky,
And look somewhere else lest the dazzle flash back from your own to her eye?

'No; I hold that the speech of the tongue be as frank and as bold as the look,
And I held up herself to herself—that was more than she got from her book.'

'Young blood,' laughed the elder; 'no doubt you are voicing the mode of To-day;
But then we old fogies, at least, gave the lady some chance for delay.

'There's my wife—(you must know)—we first met on the journey from Florence to Rome;
It took me three weeks to discover who was she and where was her home;

'Three more to be duly presented; three more ere I saw her again;
And a year ere my romance *began* where yours ended that day on the train.'

'Oh, that was the style of the stage-coach; we travel to-day by express;
Forty miles to the hour,' he answered, 'won't admit of a passion that's less.'

'But what if you make a mistake?' quoth the elder. The younger half-sighed.
'What happens when signals are wrong or switches misplaced?' he replied.

'Very well, I must bow to your wisdom,' the elder returned, 'but admit
That your chances of winning this woman your boldness has bettered no whit.

'Why, you do not, at best, know her name. And what if I try your ideal
With something, if not quite so fair, at least more *en regle* and real?

'Let me find you a partner. Nay, come, I insist—you shall follow—this way.
My dear, will you not add your grace to entreat Mr Rapid to stay?

'My wife, Mr Rapid—— Eh! what? Why, he's gone—yet he said he would come.
How rude! I don't wonder, my dear, you are properly crimson and dumb!'

## DAME FREDEGONDE.—Sir Theodore Martin.

When folks, with headstrong passion blind,
To play the fool make up their mind,
They 're sure to come, with phrases nice
And modest air, for your advice.
But, as a truth unfailing make it,
They ask, but never mean to take it.
'Tis not advice they want, in fact,
But confirmation in their act.
Now mark what did, in such a case,
A worthy priest who knew the race.

A dame more buxom, blithe, and free
Than Fredegonde you scarce would see.
So smart her dress, so trim her shape,
Ne'er hostess offered juice of grape
Could for her trade wish better sign;
Her looks gave flavour to her wine,
And each guest feels it, as he sips,
Smack of the ruby of her lips.
A smile for all, a welcome glad,
A jovial, coaxing way she had;
And—what was more her fate than blame—
A nine months' widow was our dame.
But toil was hard, for trade was good,
And gallants sometimes will be rude.
'And what can a lone woman do?
The nights are long and eerie too.
Now, Guillot there 's a likely man,
None better draws or taps a can;
He 's just the man, I think, to suit,
If I could bring my courage to 't.'
With thoughts like these her mind is crossed:
The dame, they say, who doubts, is lost.
'But then the risk? I 'll beg a slice
Of Father Raulin's good advice.'

Pranked in her best, with looks demure,
She seeks the priest; and, to be sure,
Asks if he thinks she ought to wed:
'With such a business on my head,
I 'm worried off my legs with care,
And need some help to keep things square.
I 've thought of Guillot, truth to tell!
He 's steady, knows his business well.
What do you think?' When thus he met her:
'Oh, take him, dear; you can't do better!'
'But then the danger, my good pastor,
If of the man I make the master.
There is no trusting to these men.'
'Well, well, my dear, don't have him, then!'
'But help I must have, there 's the curse;
I may go farther and fare worse.'
'Why, take him, then!' 'But if he should
Turn out a thankless ne'er-do-good—
In drink and riot waste my all,
And rout me out of house and hall?'
'Don't have him, then! But I 've a plan
To clear your doubts, if any can.
The bells a peal are ringing—hark!
Go straight, and what they tell you mark.
If they say "Yes!" wed, and be blest;
If "No," why—do as you think best.'

The bells rang out a triple bob:
Oh, how our widow's heart did throb!
And thus she heard their burden go:
'Marry, mar-marry, mar-Guillot!'
Bells were not then left to hang idle:
A week—and they rang for her bridal.
But, woe the while, they might as well
Have rung the poor dame's parting knell.
The rosy dimples left her cheek,
She lost her beauty plump and sleek;

For Guillot oftener kicked than kissed,
And backed his orders with his fist;
Proving by deeds, as well as words,
That servants make the worst of lords.

She seeks the priest her ire to wreak,
And speaks as angry women speak,
With tiger looks and bosom swelling,
Cursing the hour she took his telling.
To all his calm reply was this:
'I fear you 've read the bells amiss.
If they have led you wrong in aught,
Your wish, not they, inspired the thought.
Just go, and mark well what they say.'

Off trudged the dame upon her way,
And sure enough the chimes went so:
'Don't have that knave, that knave Guillot!'
'Too true,' she cried, 'there 's not a doubt:
What could my ears have been about?'
She had forgot that as fools think
The bell is ever sure to clink.

(From the *Bon Gaultier Ballads*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## THAT AUTOGRAPH SALE.—Elmer Ruan Coates.

The papers blew a perfect gale
For a coming autographic sale—
A sale of literary names
Rejoicing in their world-wide fames.
The list was long: the names are such
As lead the English, German, Dutch;
As have a special charm and rule
In the French, Italian, Spanish school;
As have a hold on this brainy time,
In prose and drama, blank and rhyme.

Some had a very early date,
While other autographs were late.
And a number, be it truly told,
Soon found themselves and the buyer sold.

Now Shoddy, Codfish, Puff, and Blow,
Snob, Dash, and Brag, Loud, Swell, and Show,
Squint, Ogle, Languish, Gad, and Flirt,
With the noble tribes of Squirt and Dirt,
Ride up in carriages brand new,
With the footman and the coach-dog too.
Not one of these could ever quote
A single line these authors wrote.
And, worse than this, they couldn't name
The books that give these authors fame.
And there 's a worst—the pressing need
Of one to teach them how to read.
They had not only mental sloth,
But a heavy plus of mushroom growth.
'Twas quite enough for them to know
These writers set the world aglow;
That, with their autographic names,
Their pride and pomp could play their games.
They 'd buy for others to admire,
To make the envious perspire.
They 'd buy them merely for the looks,
As they have bought their unread books.

The hammer sounds, and now the sale;
Look how the sound and zeal prevail.
In manners they are naughty boys;
We have a perfect stock-board noise,
The women quite as loud as men.
The autographs bring five, and ten,
And fifteen, twenty. Then they rise
To heights that fill you with surprise.
A bogus Cromwell, in a flash,
Is sold for fifteen hundred—cash.

A pause. The auctioneer exclaims:
'Here's an eclipse on all these names.
Let reverence now bow the head.'
They do precisely as he said.
'At a certain name your eyes must fill.
Three cheers!' They're given with a will.
'What name?' ''Tis Lady Geraldine.'
'Oh yes!—related to the Queen,'
Some fellow says. 'Tis royal fun
To hear the explanations run.
The chap who never heard her name
Is telling all about her fame.
His rivals grow to seventeen,
And they have 'Lady Geraldine'
Related to the queens and kings,
And writer of such brilliant things.
Says the auctioneer, 'I've seen her stir'——
'Great crowds!' they shout. 'We know of her.'
Said he, 'She never fears the broil'——
'No, no!' says Blow; 'in the right she'll toil.'
'Before she'd idle she would roast.'
'She would!' they cry. 'It is her boast.'
'Just think that she will carry coal!'
They shout, 'Just like her, noble soul.'
The would-knows tell how she, 'so pure,'
Will 'carry coal for worthy poor.'
'She braves the water and the fire;
In service she will rarely tire.
When slaughter raged, to her distress,
Each corpse would have the proper dress.'
Hear the tender say, 'Sweet Geraldine,
A nobler soul was never seen.'

The auctioneer is nearly dead;
He's laughed at everything he's said;
He blows his nose to hide his smile,
And thus deludes the crowd the while:
'She's daily found without a beau

Where daring women fail to go ;
While all her efforts give delight
And find a ready appetite.'
Excitement now is most profound ;
Her autograph is passed around
With solemn caution as to care.
What reverence, and how they stare !
They see in that bold, crooked hand
The genius that holds command !
When every one is all ablaze,
And rival spirit has a craze,
The auctioneer, in tone sincere,
Cries, 'Start her high. What shall I hear?'
Now you should see the battle-sport,
Each bidder bound to hold the fort.
But mighty millions ever tell—
'Gone ! Gone ! Two thousand. Mr Swell.'

With a glow and crow and pomp-parade,
The bill is very quickly paid.
Swell holds the autograph with pride,
And calls the auctioneer aside.
Says he, 'Look here. This thing I hold
Has cost a pretty pile of gold.
This very fact, my worthy friend,
Will bring the questions without end.
Now, as my memory is lame,
Please tell me all about her fame.
I hear of stir and broil and roast,
As something worthy of a boast.
I hear of coal, of water, fire,
Of service that will rarely tire.
I hear of slaughter and distress,
Each corpse receiving proper dress.
You say she 's found without a beau
Where daring women fail to go.
You speak of efforts that delight,
And of the ready appetite.

Now, sir, in brief, here 's what I mean—
Who is this wondrous Geraldine?'

The auctioneer, to make his point,
And see the noodles out of joint,
Now shouts aloud, with knowing look:
'This Geraldine 's my faithful cook!'

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## THE SEA.—Eva L. Ogden.

She was rich and of high degree;
A poor and unknown artist he.
'Paint me,' she said, 'a view of the sea.'

So he painted the sea as it looked the day
That Aphrodite arose from its spray;
And it broke, as she gazed on its face the while,
Into its countless-dimpled smile.
'What a poky, stupid picture!' said she.
'I don't believe he *can* paint the sea!'

Then he painted a raging, tossing sea,
Storming, with fierce and sudden shock,
Wild cries, and writhing tongues of foam,
A towering, mighty fastness-rock.
In its sides, above those leaping crests,
The thronging sea-birds built their nests.
'What a disagreeable daub!' said she.
'Why, it isn't anything like the sea!'

Then he painted a stretch of hot, brown sand,
With a big hotel on either hand,
And a handsome pavilion for the band—
Not a sign of the water to be seen
Except one faint little streak of green.
'What a perfectly exquisite picture!' said she.
'It 's the very *image* of the sea!'

## ABSORPTION.—John Kendrick Bangs.

We sat upon the golf-links
  Together, she and I,
And talked of love and happiness
  As hours sped them by;

And so absorbed were we twain
  With what each other said,
We noticed not the flying balls
  That whistled overhead.

We noticed not the Silverdale
  That dropped by Phyllis' back,
Nor him who lofted over us
  With a resounding thwack.

We noticed not the long drive
  That landed at my side,
For I was asking Phyllis if
  She would not be my bride.

I noticed not the brassie stroke
  That scarred my head for life,
For at that moment Phyllis said
  That she would be my wife.

The niblicks thundered round us;
  The baffies rent the air;
The mashies mashied on their way;
  The cleek was everywhere.

But I looked into Phyllis's eyes,
  And Phyllis looked in mine,
And golf was purely mortal, where-
  As love was still divine.

Green was the turf beside us;
  The skies were blue above;
We never dreamed that any one
  Was stymied by our love.

And now in after-days I sit
And conjure up the winks
Those golfers made at Cupid
And his bunker on the links.

And one and all I honour them:
Not one of all the score
Broke in upon our happiness,
Or even whispered, 'Fore!'

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## OUR FIRST CIGARS.—P. H. Bowne.

Between myself and Peter Brown
Exists that bond of friendly union
To Damon and to Pythias known,
A fellowship of sweet communion.
In boyhood's hour, when life was gay,
Was formed that strong enduring tether,
And knotted when one dreadful day
We smoked our first cigars together.

We were but tender striplings then,
With beardless lips and hopes unblighted;
But, ah! we felt like stalwart men
When those Havanas we ignited.
With buoyant steps, as when the deer
Bounds lightly o'er his native heather,
We went forth, full of hope and cheer,
To smoke our first cigars together.

We went forth, full of joy and pride:
We came back, full of woe, to languish;
Down in the cellar, side by side,
To sit and soothe each other's anguish.
And all the pangs of after-years
Produce not the obliteration
From memory of that hour of tears
And nausea and humiliation.

Yet we have faced the world since then,
And toiled and suffered, being human;
Have proved the treachery of men
(And Brown has lost his faith in woman);
Have mourned for cherished hopes laid low,
For loss of friends, and Fortune's crosses;
Have found life's ledger failed to show
Offsetting gains for all our losses.

Our prime of youth has passed away;
'Tis twenty years since I was wedded;
My beard, alas! is turning gray,
And poor old Brown is quite bald-headed;
Yet time *that* memory ne'er destroys,
And still it is our fixed persuasion
There never were two sicker boys
Than we were on that sad occasion;

Therefore it is that Peter Brown
To me seems closer than a brother;
Those mutual pangs in boyhood known
Have bound us firmly to each other.
Old comrade, may our pathways lie
Still side by side, whate'er the weather;
Long may it be ere thou and I
Shall smoke our last cigars together.

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## BUT THEY DIDN'T.—J. E. V. Cook.

O, Harry came along the lane,
And he was very late;
He hurried on to catch the train,
And had no time to wait.
He must hasten!—but against the pane
He caught a glimpse of Kate,
And he didn't, he didn't, he didn't.

O, Katie had her pastry cut,
  Her sponge was light as air;
Her pies were in the oven shut,
  And needed all her care;
She must give them ev'ry moment, but
  She spied young Harry there
    And she didn't, she didn't, she didn't.

O, Harry stopped and spoke a word,
  And spoke it very low,
And yet I think that Katie heard
  And still believed it so,
Though all the while the youth averred
  That he would have to go,
    But he didn't, he didn't, he didn't.

O, Katie said the fire was warm
  And she was 'like to drop;'
And Harry seemed to think his arm
  Was needed as a prop;
And Katie was in such alarm,
  She said that he must stop,
    But he didn't, he didn't, he didn't.

And as he held her to his breast
  And thought of what he'd missed
With Katie waiting in her nest,
  Just longing to be kissed,
He bent his head, her face was hid,
  I saw a flash and gleam
Of lovely eyes, and then—he *did*—
  I thought the girl would scream,
    But ——, ——, ——!

## 'HULLO!'—S. W. Foss.

W'en you see a man in woe,
Walk right up an' say 'Hullo!'
Say 'Hullo!' an' 'How d'ye do?'
'How's the world a-usin' you?'
Slap the fellow on his back,
Bring yer han' down with a whack;
Waltz right up, an' don't go slow,
Grin an' shake an' say 'Hullo!'

Is he clothed in rags? O sho!
Walk right up an' say 'Hullo!'
Rags is but a cotton roll
Jest for wrappin' up a soul;
An' a soul is worth a true
Hale an' hearty 'How d'ye do?'
Don't wait for the crowd to go;
Walk right up and say 'Hullo!'

W'en big vessels meet, they say,
They saloot an' sail away.
Jest the same are you an' me,
Lonesome ships upon a sea;
Each one sailing his own jog
For a port beyond the fog.
Let yer speakin'-trumpet blow,
Lift yer horn an' cry 'Hullo!'

Say 'Hullo!' an' 'How d'ye do?'
Other folks are good as you.
W'en ye leave yer house of clay,
Wanderin' in the Far-away,
W'en you travel through the strange
Country t'other side the range,
Then the souls you 've cheered will know
Who ye be, an' say 'Hullo!'

# PROSE PIECES:

## HUMOROUS.

### CAPTAIN STEEL'S DILEMMA.—JAMES PAYN.

*(Abridged for Recitation.)*

There is none of us (the present reader, of course, excepted), however charming and irresistible, without a fault. Fauntleroy, one of the pleasantest men in London, was addicted to forgery. Robespierre, surnamed 'the Incorruptible' for his steadfastness of purpose, had a weakness for the guillotine. Cæsar, who never turned his back upon a military foe, fled from the sheriff's officer. Madame Lafarge was young, beautiful, and accomplished, but she had a passion for the administration of arsenic. The benevolent Rousseau, who devoted himself to his fellow-creatures, sent his own children to the Foundling. Henry VIII., a genuine adorer of the fair sex—— But enough of examples. I have quoted sufficient to show that my hero, Captain Hippolyte Steel, adjutant of the Royal Blankshire Volunteers, was not the first person recorded in history whose otherwise unexceptionable character was marred by a defect. He was good-looking and patriotic, courageous and genteel; he had four hundred a year of his own in land; never smoked tobacco; was a *bonâ fide* member of the Church, and the best shot in his regiment—but he was not punctual. There was the rub. In drill, it is true, he made his men keep time; but we all know how easy it is to correct the

faults of others. He never kept it himself: I think I may really say *never*.

The Newmans of Eaton Place once waited twenty-five minutes for him, and got their turbot spoiled. This, of itself, only showed that the Newmans, being *parvenus*, were ready to abase themselves before the heir-presumptive of a baronetcy; but old Bullion, the banker, unhappily for Hippolyte, was also of the party, and not at all inclined to abase himself. I heard what he muttered over that fish in rags, but I do not venture to repeat it. When the poor unconscious captain, drawing his chair towards him in a friendly manner at dessert, inquired, 'And how is Miss Margaret, sir, to-day?' he replied, 'And what the deuce is that to you, sir?' Margaret Bullion being the banker's only daughter and heiress, who had been hitherto understood to be the *fiancée* of the gallant adjutant of volunteers. Never was unpunctuality so punished.

'Am *I* to be kept waiting, and get my turbot spoiled, because this son of a baronet chooses to dawdle?' was all that the remonstrances of Margaret and her bridesmaids (elect) could for weeks elicit from the old gentleman.

At last, when she insisted with tears, 'But he will *never*, *never* be late again, papa,' he was so far mollified as to permit the courtship to be renewed upon that basis.

'I am a plain business man, sir,' remarked he to the captain, 'and have always met my engagements to the day. It is as easy to be in time as to be after it; and if you cannot conquer a bad habit, you are not the sort of person I wish to see married to my daughter. You understand, therefore, that if you aspire to be her husband, you will not be late again for any important matter such as dinner, and least of all when I am one of the company.'

Captain Steel was proud, but he also doted upon Margaret, and he swallowed his resentment, and submitted. He only lived for her and the volunteer force. There was, of course, no pecuniary necessity for his undertaking the duties of an adjutant; but he liked the work, and did it well. He was always too late, of course; but when he once began he made up for lost time. His men adored him, and he would have put himself to any inconvenience —short of being in time—to serve them. He had a rifle-butt erected in his own grounds, so that those to whom it was nearer

than where the regimental target stood might come and practise here. There was a shot-proof house for the marker upon one side of it, and all complete.

The time for Hippolyte's marriage was drawing very near, and it was not his intention to be late for *that*, I promise you. Indeed, since that edict of his future father-in-law he had much improved in respect to punctuality, as I can certify, who happened to be staying with him during those last bachelor days.

Upon a certain day we were engaged to dine with the Bullions at their country seat in the neighbourhood. At four o'clock Hippolyte had put on his evening clothes, in which he looked remarkably well; but still, as I observed, it was a premature proceeding. 'Never mind,' said he; 'I feel safe in these. I shan't have to dress, in case anything should happen to delay us.'

It was quite touching to see his anxiety and desire to amend. 'When I have once got her,' said he (referring to his beloved object), 'I 'll snap my fingers at old Bullion, and make a point of never being in time for anything.'

At half-past four who should ride up on that speedy 'weed' of his but Mr Nolan O'Shaughnessy, of the Royal Blankshire Volunteers, one of those Irish gentlemen to be found in every corps, about whom nobody knows anything, except that there they are. He was sorry to intrude, but he had been accidentally shut out of the regimental competition last week, and was exceedingly anxious to get into Class II. It was competent for the adjutant to admit him, if he should succeed in satisfying him of his efficiency, which half-an-hour's practice at the target would suffice to do.

'I doubt that, my good fellow,' said Hippolyte, 'for your shooting used to be rather wild; but I can just spare you half-an-hour.'

So we went out to the butt, O'Shaughnessy leading his thoroughbred, and tethering that attenuated animal to a neighbouring gate. He had characteristically omitted to bring his ammunition with him, which the adjutant had to supply.

When Steel and I had shut ourselves up in the marker's box, which was quite an arbour-like little edifice of turf, with its one aperture close to the target, I remarked to my companion that our friend from the Emerald Isle had rather an undisciplined appearance.

'He 's as mad as a March hare,' said he, 'and knows about as

much about shooting. He will never get into the second class as long as he lives; only one does not like to seem ill-natured. We shall never have to use the green flag, for he never made a bull's-eye in the course of his existence, and I very much doubt if he will ever make an "outer"'——

'What 's that?' cried I, as a dull thud on one side of our turf-hut followed the discharge of his first shot.

'Oh, he 's hit our butt instead of the target, that 's all,' returned Hippolyte coolly. 'It 's quite shot-proof; never fear.'

'But he must be a lunatic,' remonstrated I. 'Why do you let him shoot at all?'

'I can't stop him. By Jove, how quick he fires! But it will be all the sooner over. Stop a bit; you mustn't distract an adjutant's attention. I don't know whether that was a hit or not; I must go out and see. I suppose he knows that the red flag means Stop Firing.' Hippolyte put out the signal in question, waved it in the usual manner, and then stepped out himself. An instant afterwards there was a sharp crack, and then a bullet whizzed within half an inch of his left ear.

'Goodness gracious,' cried Hippolyte, hastily re-entering his ark of safety, 'that blackguard nearly shot me! It shows he had no *malice prepense*, or else he would not have been so near. But the idea of his disregarding the red flag! Confound his ignorance, I 'll have him drummed out of the corps.'

All this time quite a storm of bullets was hurtling about our ears. If rapid firing, altogether independent of aim, could have ensured Mr O'Shaughnessy's promotion, he would have already been in the second class. Not a single bullet, however, hit the target.

At this moment a terrible incident occurred: out of the thymy moss-clad seat on which we sat there flew an enormous insect with an appalling boom, and began to circle around us. I am not well acquainted with the entomology of the country, and I concluded it to be only a bumble-bee. But I noticed Hippolyte turn pale and wave the red flag with frantic excitement. At this moment another bumble-bee flew out, and joined the mazy circles of its predecessors.

'What a noise these bumble-bees make,' said I, 'in this confined space; and I don't think I ever saw such big ones.'

'Hush!' said Hippolyte. 'Do not enrage them; they are hornets. I have no doubt that we are sitting upon a nest of them!'

Imagine our position, in a diminutive sentry-box, five feet high by four feet wide, tenanted by hornets, and the only means of egress exposed to the murderous fire of a madman.

'If this reptile stings my nose it will be double its size in half a minute,' said Hippolyte, with the calmness of despair.

I knew the poor fellow was thinking of how he could present himself in such a condition to his beloved object. A lady's lip is none the worse, as the poet tells us, if it does look as though 'a bee had stung it newly;' but the case is widely different in respect to a gentleman's nose and a hornet.

Still, the gallant captain did not lose his presence of mind. 'If you can find the little hole from which these infernal villains escaped,' said he, 'stop it quietly up with your finger, or anything.'

'Not with my finger, if I know it,' returned I, endeavouring to pacify the hornet that was devoting itself to me by blowing gently at it; 'but I will try the handle of my penknife.'

This brilliant idea was executed with the most complete success. There was a noise as of about twelve church organs in the seat beneath us, but it was muffled. The penknife exactly fitted. Agitated, I have no doubt, by the stifled voices of their relatives, the two outside hornets whizzed about us like catherine-wheels. We dared not move a muscle, except that Hippolyte kept on waving the red flag, which only seemed to have the same effect upon O'Shaughnessy as on some savage bull—namely, to excite him to frenzy. He appeared to fire about twenty shots a minute, and all wide ones.

'How many cartridges has the villain got?' inquired I.

'Enough for a twelvemonth,' groaned the adjutant. 'They have put the regimental chest under the walnut-tree. What time is it? If this unutterable idiot *does* get me late for dinner I'll wring his neck.'

With the utmost caution, and with an apologetic glance at my hornet, I drew forth my watch. 'We have no time to lose,' said I. 'We have already been here half-an-hour, and indeed it seems half a day.'

'I 'll chance it,' cried Hippolyte, setting his teeth and gathering himself together for a rush.

'You will be a dead man,' said I, 'if you do. Think of your Margaret, and don't leave a poor fellow alone in this horrid place with a couple of hornets. See, that scoundrel has already put three bullets through the red flag. If you had been there they would have gone through you instead.'

The argument was unanswerable; Hippolyte gnashed his teeth in impotent rage.

'I am sure,' said I soothingly, 'when old Bullion comes to understand the very peculiar circumstances of our position, he will perceive that punctuality was out of the question. This unmitigated scoundrel, O'Shaughnessy'——

'Arrah, captain, jewel, and ain't I in Class II. by this time?' ejaculated a querulous voice, and at the aperture of our prison-house appeared the hateful features of our jailer, distorted by an adulatory grin.

To throw the red flag in his face, to leap out of the marker's butt, and fly towards the gate at which the speedy 'weed' was tethered, was but the work of a moment; and the next, Captain Steel was flying across the country in full evening-dress, in the direction of his dinner.

As for me, before O'Shaughnessy could recover from his amazement I had jerked the penknife out of the hole, and was running homeward at full speed, leaving that gallant volunteer surrounded by such a host of infuriated hornets that they seemed to darken the air.

So Captain and Adjutant Hippolyte Steel got in time for dinner and for Margaret, after all.

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## HE TRIED TO TELL HIS WIFE.—Anon.

If there is one thing more than another calculated to throw a man into a gnashing-of-the-teeth and tearing-of-the-hair condition, it is his attempt to give his wife an account of some ordinary affair. Only the other day Mr James Smith wished to relate to his better-half a little story. He began:

'Oh, my dear, I must tell you something Jack Burroughs told me to-day while'——

'Where did you see Jack Burroughs?' answered the wife.

'Oh, we went to luncheon together, and'——

'How did you happen to go to luncheon together?'

'Well, we didn't exactly go together. I met Jack at the restaurant, and'——

'What restaurant?'

'Calloway's; and Jack'——

'How did you happen to go to Calloway's? I thought you always lunched at Draper's?'

'I nearly always do, but I just happened to drop into Calloway's to-day, along with Jack, and'——

'Does he always lunch at Calloway's?'

'I'm sure, my dear, that I don't know if he does or does not. It makes no earthly difference if'——

'Oh, of course not. I just wondered if he did, that's all. Go on with your story.'

'Well, while we were eating our soup, Jack'——

'What kind of soup?'

'Oxtail. Jack said that'——

'I thought you disliked oxtail-soup?'

'Well, I don't care much about it, but'——

'How did you happen to order it if you didn't care for it?'

'Because I *did*. But the soup has nothing to do with the story.'

'Oh, of course not. I never said that it had. I don't see why you should get cross over a simple question. Go on.'

'Well, while we were eating our soup Laurence Hill and his wife came in, and'——

'They did?'

'I have just said so.'

'Well, you needn't be so cross about it.'

'They came in, and'——

'Is she pretty?'

'Pretty enough. Jack bowed, and'——

'Does he know them?'

'Well, now, do you suppose he would have bowed if he hadn't known them? I declare, if I'——

'How was she dressed?'

'How should I know? I never looked at her dress. What I was going to tell you was that'——

'Did they sit near you?'

'Yes, at the next table. And while they were ordering, Jack said that they'——

'Couldn't they hear him?'

'Do you suppose that Jack would have no more sense than to let them hear him talk about them? Look here, now'——

'James, if you can't tell a simple little incident without getting into a passion, you'd better keep it to yourself. What did Jack say?'

'He said that Mrs Hill's father was opposed to the match, and'——

'How did he know that?'

'Great Cæsar, there you go again!'

'James, you will please remember that it is your wife to whom you are speaking, sir!'

'No other woman could drive me raving, distracted, crazy, asking silly questions about'——

'James!'

'Every time I try to tell you anything you begin, and you'——

'James, I do not propose listening to any such insulting remarks, and'——

'You never listen to anything. That's the trouble. If'——

'When I ask you a simple question, you'——

'Simple *question!* You've asked me a million simple questions in the last few minutes, just because I was going to tell you that Jack Burroughs said that'——

'I do not wish to know what Mr Jack Burroughs said, if you cannot tell it respectfully. I shall have my dinner sent to my room, since it is so painful for you to eat with an id-i-idiot, boo-oo-oo!'

And the much-injured wife retires to her room, while her husband narrowly escapes an attack of apoplexy.

## SAUNDERS MOWDIEWORT ON BESOM-SHANKS.

S. R. CROCKETT.

(*Abridged for Recitation.*)

Ralph Peden had written a letter to his sweetheart, Winsome Charteris, and, naturally, thought of a trusty messenger to deliver it. He saw Saunders Mowdiewort, the gravedigger, come over from his house by the kirkyard, and Ralph left his books and went down to find him. Saunders was in the stable occupying himself with the mysteries of the mare's straps and buckles.

'An' this is the letter, an' I 'm to gi'e it to the same lass as I gi'ed the last yin till? I 'll do that, an' thank ye kindly,' said Saunders, putting the letter into one pocket, and Ralph's shilling into the other; 'no' that I need onything for the bit job, but white silver kind o' buckles friendship. It 's worth your while, an' it 's worth my while—that 's the way I look at it. It 's a strange thing, love—it levels a'. Noo, there 's me, that has had a wife an' burriet her; I 'm juist as keen aboot gettin' anither as if I had never gotten the besom i' the sma' o' my back. Ye wad never get a besom in the sma' o' yer back?'

'No,' said Ralph, smiling in spite of himself.

'Na, of course no'; ye hav'na been marriet. But bide a wee; she 's a fell active bit lass, that o' yours, an' I should say—I wad say she micht be verra handy wi' the besom.'

'You must not speak in that way,' began Ralph.

'Na, of course no', when ye are young an' gaun coortin' ye dinna think o' thae things. But bide a wee till ye gaun on the same errand the second time, and aiblins the third time—I 've seen the like, sir—an' a' thae things comes intil yer reckoning, so to speak.'

'Really, Saunders, I have not looked so far forward.'

Saunders breathed on a buckle and polished it with the tail of his coat—after which he rubbed it on his knee. Then he held it up critically in a better light. Still it did not please him, so he breathed on it once more.

'Na, of course no'. It 's no' in youth to think o' thae things—

no' till it's ower late. Noo, sir, I'll tell ye, whan I was coortin' my first, afore I gat her, I could ha'e etten her, I likit her that weel; an' the first week efter Maister Teends mairrit us I juist *danced*, I was that fond o' her. But in anither month faith I thocht that she wad ha'e etten me; an' afore the year was oot I wussed she had. Ay, ay, sir, it's waur nor a lottery, mairriage—it's a great mystery.'

'But how is it, then, that you are so anxious to marry again?'

'Well, ye see, Maister Ralph, I'm by inclination a social man, an' the nature o' my avocation, so to speak, is a wee unsocial. Fowk are that curious. The lads whiles jeer at me when I gang into the square o' a forenicht. The like o' that tells on a man in time, sir.'

'Without doubt. But how does matrimony, for either the first or the second time, cure that?'

'Weel, sir, ye see, mairriage mak's a man kind o' independent like. Say, for instance, he has been a' day up at jobs i' the yaird, an' it's no' been what ye micht ca' pleesant crunchin' through green wud an' waur whiles. Noo, we'll say that, juist as a precaution, ye ken, ye ha'e run ower to the "Black Bull" for a gless or twa at noos-an'-thans.'

'*I* have run over, Saunders.'

'Oh, it's juist a mainner o' speakin', sir; I was takin' a personal example. Weel, ye gang hame to the wife aboot the gloamin', an' ye open the door, an' ye says, says you, pleesant-like, bein' warm aboot the wame, 'Guid-e'en to ye, guidwife, my dawtie, an' hoo's a' things been gaun on wi' ye the day?' D'ye think she needs to luik roon' to ken a' aboot the "Black Bull"? Na, na; she kens withoot even turnin' her heid. She kenned by yer verra fit as ye cam' up the yaird. She's maybe stirrin' something i' the pat. She turns roon' wi' the pat-stick i' her haund. "I'll 'dawtie' ye, my man!" she says, an' *whang*, afore ye ken whaur ye are, the pat-stick is acquaint wi' the side o' yer heid. "I'll 'dawtie' ye, rinnin' rakin' to the public-hoose wi' yer hard-earned shillin's. 'Dawtie,'" quo' she; "faith, the 'Black Bull''s your dawtie!"'

'But how does she know, Saunders?'

'Dinna ye ever think that ye can gang intil a public-hoose

withoot yer wife kennin'. Na, it's no' the smell, as an unmairrit man micht think; an' peppermints is a vain thing, also ceenimons. It's juist their faculty—ay, that's what it is—it's a faculty they ha'e; an' they're a' alike. They ken as weel wi' the back o' their heids till ye, an' their noses fair stuffit wi' the cauld, whether ye ha'e been makin' a ca' or twa on the road hame on pay-nicht. I ken it's astonishin' to a single man, but ye had better tak' my word for't, it's the case. "Whaur's that auchteenpence?" Betty used to ask. "Only twal' and sixpence, an' your wages is fourteen shillin's." Then ye hummer an' ha', an' try to think on the lee ye made up on the road doon; but it's a gye queery thing that ye canna mind o't. It's an odd thing hoo jooky a made-up lee is whan ye want it in time o' need!'

'And what then?' said Ralph.

'Then, then, say ye. *Then* is juist whaur the besom comes in —i' the sma' o' yer back. An' ye may thank a kind Providence gin there's plenty o' heather on the end o't. Keep aye plenty o' heather on the end o' the besom, a prudent man aye sees to that. What is't to buy a new besom or twa when ye see the auld yin gettin' bare? Oh ay, a prudent man aye sees to his wife's besom. Ye'll maybe no' believe me, but often what mak's a' the difference atween a *freendly* turn up wi' the wife, that kind o' cheers a man, an' what ye micht ca' an onpleasantness—is juist nae mair nor nae less than whether there's plenty o' heather on his wife's besom. A besom i' the sma' o' yer back is interestin' an' enleevenin' whan it's new, but it's the verra mischief whan ye get the bare shank on the back o' yer heid—an' mind that.'

'And what do you want another wife for, then, Saunders?'

'You see, the way o't is this, sir: yin's mither (an' mind, I'm far frae sayin' a word agin my ain mither—she's a guid yin, for a' her tongue, whilk, ye ken, sir, she canna help ony mair than bein' a woman), but ye ken that when ye come hame frae the "Black Bull" gin a man has only his mither, she begins to flyte on him, and cast up tae him what his faither, dacent man, wad ha'e said, an' maybe on the back o' that she fa's to the greetin'. Noo, that's no' comfortable ava. A man that gangs to the "Black Bull" disna care a flee's hin'-leg what his faither wad ha'e said. He disna want to be grutten ower; na, what he

wants is a guid-gaun tongue, a wullin' airm, an' a heather besom no' ower sair worn. Then on the morrow's morn, whan ye rub yer elbow, an' fin' forbye that there's something on yer left shoulder-blade that's no' on the ither, ye tak' a resolve that ye'll come straucht hame the nicht. Then, at e'en, whan ye come near the "Black Bull" an' see a crony that ye had a gless wi' the nicht afore, ye naturally tak' a bit race by juist to get on the safe side o' yer hoose. I'm hearin' aboot new-fangled folk that they ca' "temperance advocates," Maister Ralph; but, for my pairt, gie me a lang-shankit besom an' a guidwife's wullin' airm!'

(From *The Lilac Sun Bonnet*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## PIP'S FIGHT.—CHARLES DICKENS.

'Come and fight,' said the pale young gentleman.

What could I do but follow him? I have often asked myself the question since; but what else could I do? His manner was so final, and I was so astonished, that I followed where he led, as if I had been under a spell.

'Stop a minute, though,' he said, wheeling round before we had got many paces. 'I ought to give you a reason for fighting, too. There it is!' In a most irritating manner he instantly slapped his hands against one another, daintily flung one of his legs up behind him, pulled my hair, slapped his hands again, dipped his head, and butted it into my stomach.

The bull-like proceeding last mentioned, besides that it was unquestionably to be regarded in the light of a liberty, was particularly disagreeable just after bread and meat. I therefore hit out at him, and was going to hit out again, when he said, 'Aha! Would you?' and began dancing backward and forward in a manner quite unparalleled within my limited experience.

'Laws of the game!' said he. Here he skipped from his left leg on to his right. 'Regular rules!' Here he skipped from his right leg on to his left. 'Come to the ground, and go through the preliminaries!' Here he dodged backward and forward, and did all sorts of things, while I looked helplessly at him.

I was secretly afraid of him when I saw him so dexterous; but I felt morally and physically convinced that his light head of hair could have had no business in the pit of my stomach, and that I had a right to consider it irrelevant when so obtruded on my attention. Therefore, I followed him without a word to a retired nook of the garden, formed by the junction of two walls, and screened by some rubbish. On his asking me if I was satisfied with the ground, and on my replying, 'Yes,' he begged my leave to absent himself for a moment, and quickly returned with a bottle of water and a sponge dipped in vinegar. 'Available for both,' he said, placing these against the wall; and then fell to pulling off, not only his jacket and waistcoat, but his shirt too, in a manner at once light-hearted, business-like, and bloodthirsty.

Although he did not look very healthy, having pimples on his face and a breaking-out at his mouth, these dreadful preparations quite appalled me. I judged him to be about my own age; but he was much taller, and he had a way of spinning himself about that was full of appearance. For the rest, he was a young gentleman in a gray suit (when not denuded for battle), with his elbows, knees, wrists, and heels considerably in advance of the rest of him as to development.

My heart failed me when I saw him squaring at me with every demonstration of mechanical nicety, and eyeing my anatomy as if he were minutely choosing his bone. I never have been so surprised in my life as I was when I let out the first blow, and saw him lying on his back, looking up at me with a bloody nose and his face exceedingly fore-shortened.

But he was on his feet directly, and after sponging himself with a great show of dexterity, began squaring again. The second greatest surprise I have ever had in my life was seeing him on his back again, looking up at me out of a black eye.

His spirit inspired me with great respect. He seemed to have no strength, and he never once hit me hard, and he was always knocked down; but he would be up again in a moment, sponging himself or drinking out of the water-bottle, with the greatest satisfaction in seconding himself according to form, and then came at me with an air and a show that made me believe he really was going to do for me at last. He got heavily bruised, for I am

sorry to record that the more I hit him the harder I hit him; but he came up again and again and again, until at last he got a bad fall with the back of his head against the wall. Even after that crisis in our affairs he got up and turned round and round confusedly a few times, not knowing where I was; but finally went on his knees to his sponge and threw it up, at the same time panting out, 'That means you have won.'

He seemed so brave and innocent that, although I had not proposed the contest, I felt but a gloomy satisfaction in my victory. Indeed, I go so far as to hope that I regarded myself, while dressing, as a species of savage young wolf, or other wild beast. However, I got dressed, darkly wiping my sanguinary face at intervals, and I said, 'Can I help you?' and he said, 'No, thankee;' and I said, 'Good-afternoon;' and *he* said, 'Same to you.'

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## THE BALD-HEADED MAN.—ANON.

The other day a lady, accompanied by her son, a very small boy, boarded a train at Little Rock. The woman had a careworn expression hanging over her face like a tattered veil, and many of the rapid questions asked by the boy were answered by unconscious sighs.

'Ma,' said the boy, 'that man's like a baby, ain't he?' pointing to a bald-headed man sitting just in front of them.

'Hush!'

'Why must I hush?'

After a few moments' silence: 'Ma, what's the matter with that man's head?'

'Hush, I tell you! He's bald.'

'What's bald?'

'His head hasn't got any hair on it.'

'Did it come off?'

'I guess so.'

'Will mine come off?'

'Some time, maybe.'

'Then I'll be bald, won't I?'

'Yes.'

'Will you care?'

'Don't ask so many questions.'

After another silence the boy exclaimed, 'Ma, look at that fly on that man's head.'

'If you don't hush I'll whip you when we get home.'

'Look! There's another fly. Look at 'em fight; look at 'em!'

'Madam,' said the man, putting aside a newspaper and looking round, 'what's the matter with that young hyena?'

The woman blushed, stammered out something, and attempted to smooth back the boy's hair.

'One fly, two flies, three flies,' said the boy innocently, following with his eyes a basket of oranges carried by a newsboy.

'Here, you young hedgehog,' said the bald-headed man, 'if you don't hush I'll have the conductor put you off the train.'

The poor woman, not knowing what else to do, boxed the boy's ears, and then gave him an orange to keep him from crying.

'Ma, have I got red marks on my head?'

'I'll whip you again if you don't hush.'

'Mister,' said the boy after a short silence, 'does it hurt to be bald-headed?'

'Youngster,' said the man, 'if you'll keep quiet I'll give you sixpence.'

The boy promised, and the money was paid over.

The man took up his paper and resumed his reading.

'This is my bald-headed money,' said the boy. 'When I get bald-headed I'm goin' to give boys money. Mister, have all bald-headed men got money?'

The annoyed man threw down his paper, arose, and exclaimed, 'Madam, hereafter when you travel leave that young gorilla at home. Hitherto I always thought that the old prophet was very cruel for calling the bears to kill the children for making sport of his head, but now I am forced to believe that he did a Christian act. If your boy had been in the crowd he would have died first. If I can't find another seat in this train, I'll ride on the cow-catcher rather than remain here.'

'The bald-headed man is gone,' said the boy; and, as the woman leaned back, a tired sigh escaped from her lips.

## MANIS THE BESOM-MAN.—'MAC.'

*(Abridged for Recitation.)*

Once upon a time there was a man named Manis, who supported himself and his old mother by making besoms out of the long heather on the lonely moor where they lived. One day, when Manis was driving his sorry old institution of a horse to the town wid a load of besoms for sale, he began to ruminate to himself on the bad trade this same besom-making was becoming entirely; that he could hardly keep body and soul sticking together himself, let alone support his mother and a poor old horse, that would soon die on his hands anyway; and then he 'd be in a fix, for he couldn't scrape as much money together as would buy a new straddle, let alone a new horse. And then, as for selling this one, it 's what he 'd have to pay a man to take it off his hands, let alone get money for him. 'But it 's a bad disaise that can't be cured somehow,' Manis said to himself; so he began to consider to himself how he could sell his rickle of a pony to advantage. Manis had about as clever a head as ever was set on ignorant shoulders, and he was not long in finding a way out of the pickle. When he went to the town and sold his besoms, and got the money for them, he put the money into shilling pieces, half-crown pieces, and one half-sovereign; and, inquiring for the grandest hotel, he put his horse into a stable, and stuck the gold half-sovereign and all the other pieces into the holes in its hide—for the poor baste's skin had holes enough to hide away a fortune in, goodness knows!—slipping them just what you 'd know in under the skin. Then he went into the hotel, and ordered the best of everything, eating and drinking, for himself; and as for the horse, he told them not to spare the corn and the bran mashes on him, for he was going to put him into training for a great race. Manis got all he called for, and the horse, too, got everything of the best; and all fared well till it came to the paying of the bill, which came to a big figure entirely. When the bill was put before him,

Manis said he would call again an' pay it, that he had no ready cash about him now, an' all that; but the waiters raised a ruction, and sent for the owner of the hotel himself, who happened to be the Mayor over the town, an' they pointed out Manis to him, an' told him the whole story; and the Mayor said that if Manis didn't pay the money on that instant moment, he would send for the soldiers an' have him tried by coort-martial at once.

'Well, well,' sez Manis, sez he, 'but this is a nice how-do-ye-do, that a gintleman can't be trusted for a few shillings only this way. Swate good-luck to you and your house,' sez he to the Mayor. 'I niver yet in all my travels met with such ondaicent people. Though I have a shabby coat on me atself,' sez Manis, 'don't judge me by that, for that 's my notion, an' it 's the way I choose to go. And look ye here now, Misther Mayor,' sez he; 'I could not only pay for my own dinner, but I could invite every mother's sowl in this town—good, bad, and ondifferent; big, wee, and middling—here, and give them their dinners, an' pay for them, and buy you out of house and home then, and make a present of it to your waiter there the next minute, and live as ondependent as a prence still after,' sez Manis. 'But if you must be paid for your hungry bit of a dinner, that wouldn't break a man's fast on a Good Friday, ye must. I left my purse behind me at home, and I didn't just want to sthrike my poor baste, now, seeing he 's after a long journey; but to stop your talking I 'll do anything, so here goes.' And with that Manis plants his hat on his head and away out to the stables, with the Mayor and all the waiters after him to see what he would do at all, at all.

Manis led out the pony to the yard, and telling the crowd to stand off him, he got the pony by the head with one hand, and with a small stick he struck the horse's ribs just beside the place he hid the half-sovereign, and the horse flung up his heels as well as he was able—bekase for six years before he never had the spirit to fling till he got the feed of corn and bran—and out jumps the gold half-sovereign, and rolls just right to the Mayor's feet. The Mayor looked down at it, bewildered.

'Will ye kindly,' sez Manis, sez he, 'will yer Mayorship kindly pick up that coin and tell me how much it is?'

The Mayor picked it up, and he looked at it, and he turned it over and looked at the other side, and then jingled it on the ground, and next bit it with his teeth.

'Well, by all that 's infarnal,' sez he, 'but it 's a good, shining, gold half-sovereign,' sez he, 'with the king's head on it!'

'Humph!' sez Manis, sez he, 'is that all? That 's not enough, then; we must try again.'

So Manis whacked the horse again, and again, and again; and the horse flung up again, and again, and again; and the coins came jumping out, rolling among the waiters; and them picking them up and shouting out every time how much they were. When Manis got enough to pay the bill—

'Now,' sez he, 'when I have my hand on him, I may as well take the price of a box of matches and a bit of tobacco out of him;' and he whacked out another couple of half-crowns, the Mayor and the waiters looking on with their mouths open, and rubbing their eyes every now and then to see whether it was asleep or awake they were. When Manis had finished, and had all the coins out of him except a couple, he yoked him into the cart as if he was going to start.

'I say, my good man,' sez the Mayor when he got his breath with him—'I say, my good man,' sez he, 'would you sell that horse?'

'Is it sell him?' sez Manis, sez he. 'Not by no means.'

'I would be content to give you a good penny for him,' sez the Mayor, 'just as a curiosity to show my friends, you know.'

'You 'll have to get some other curiosity for your friends this time, then,' sez Manis. 'This would be a rare curiosity entirely.'

'I wouldn't refuse you fifty pounds down in cold cash for him,' sez the Mayor.

'Faix, I suppose you would not,' sez Manis tartly.

'I wouldn't refuse you a hundred pounds down for him, now that I think of it,' sez the Mayor.

'Think again,' sez Manis.

'Oh, but I think that a big penny,' sez the Mayor.

'And wouldn't you think five hundred bigger?' sez Manis.

'Oh, I couldn't think of that, my good man,' sez the Mayor.

'Very well and good, then,' sez Manis. 'When every one sticks to their own, no man 's wronged. Good-morning and good luck,' sez he, making wonderful big quavers with the reins and whip, as if he wanted to get away whether or no, and showing that he was no way consarned to make sale.

'Hold on, hold on, you,' sez the Mayor. 'One of you run in there,' sez he to the waiters, 'and fetch me out five hundred pounds you 'll get rolled up in the foot of an old stocking in the bottom corner of my trunk; and the others of you take this horse out of the cart and put him in the stable,' sez he.

So the waiter came running back with the foot of an old stocking, and the Lord Mayor counted five hundred gold sovereigns out of it down into Manis's hand, and Manis and him parted, Manis going home whistling with a light heart.

The Mayor had the pony locked up in a stable by itself, up to the eyes in corn and bran, and he double locked the door, and put the key in his pocket. Then he went round his gentlemen friends to tell them of his good fortune, and invited them all to come at twelve o'clock the next day and have the pleasure of seeing him flogging a hundred pound or so out of the horse.

Sure enough, at twelve o'clock next day, all his gentlemen friends gathered in the hotel yard, and the Lord Mayor came out and opened the stable door, and ordered one of his men to lead out the horse. He had a nice, tough little cane himself, and he went round clearing a circle round the horse, and putting his gentlemen friends back with the cane.

'Now, John,' sez he to the man who was holding the horse, 'keep a good, tight grip on the reins, and don't let him burst away. I 'll not keep you long, for I 'll only take a few hundred pounds or so out of him the day, just to let these gentlemen friends of mine see the thing. Hold hard now,' sez he, and he drew the cane a hard slap on the poor baste's ribs.

Up flung the horse, and out jumped a coin and rolled to the ground.

The Lord Mayor crossed his arms, and axed some of the crowd to lift it and tell him what it was.

They lifted it and examined it as if it was one of the seven wonders of the world, and sez they:

'It's a good, bright shilling with the king's head on it.'

'Humph!' sez the Lord Mayor, a wee bit taken aback, 'is that all? I expected a bit of gold, but the gold's to come yet. Hold hard again, John,' sez he, and he come down another sharp rap on the horse's ribs. Up flung the horse, and out jumps another coin. 'Kindly tell me,' sez the Mayor, crossing his arms and looking on indifferently—'Kindly tell me,' sez he, 'how much is that?'

The crowd took it up again, rubbed it, scratched it, and bit it, and sez they:

'It's a half-crown, by the toss o' war!'

'Well, middling, middling,' sez he. 'We're getting towards the gold now. Hold hard again, John! Look out, gintlemen, for I'm guessing this will be a half-sovereign, or a sovereign, and it might get lost!' And with that he comes down another rap on the baste's ribs, but lo! and behold you, though the horse flung ever so high, the sorra take the coin that come out.

The Lord Mayor looked around him, and then looked up in the air to see if the coin went up that way and forgot to come down again; but seeing no sign of it there, he turned to John and sez he:

'Which way did that coin go, John?'

'Faith,' sez John, sez he, 'you put me a puzzler. Ax me another!'

'There must be some mistake,' sez the Lord Mayor, sez he. 'Don't you think isn't there some mistake, John?'

'Faix,' sez John, 'I would be very strongly of the opinion that there is.'

'John,' sez the Lord Mayor, sez he, 'I think we're not holding his head the right way. What do you think if we held his head to the north?'

'Anything at all you please,' sez John. 'I'm paid to obey orders.'

'All right, John,' sez the Lord Mayor; 'just move his head that way a little. That's it. Now hold hard, John, and keep a sharp eye on the coin,' sez he, spitting on the stick, and bringing it

down again on the poor baste's body. Up jumped the horse, and back jumped the Mayor, holding out his hand, and saying 'Whisht, whisht!' to see where the coin would fall. But, movrone, ne'er a coin was to be heard. The first thing the Mayor heard was a bit of a titter of a laugh, and then another, and another, till the titter went round all his gentlemen friends. With that he got black in the face, to find that he had made such a fool of himself, and he fell to the flogging of the horse, determined to have it out of him if there was a coin at all in him. And he flogged him up and flogged him down, until his gentlemen friends dragged him off the horse. And the horse was dragged off, and the Mayor was dragged in, and the town laughed for nine days after, till they laughed the Lord Mayor clean out of his office. And as for Manis, the rascal, he gave up the besom-making, as well he might, and he lived an ondependent private gentleman himself and his mother for the rest of their days on the interest of the money.

(From *The Leadin' Road to Donegal*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## A NIPPY TONGUE.—Ian Maclaren.

(*Abridged for Recitation.*)

The people of Drumtochty did not ground their admiration of Jamie Soutar on his personal appearance, which lent itself to criticism, and suggested a fine carelessness on the part of Nature. His head was too large for his body, and rested on his chest. One shoulder had a twist forward, which invested Jamie with an air of aggression. His legs were constructed on the principle that one knee said to the other, 'If you let me pass this time I'll let you pass next time.' His rate of progression was over four miles an hour; but his method was sideways, and was so wonderful, not to say impressive, that even phlegmatic folk had been known to follow Jamie's back-view till it disappeared, and then say 'Michty!' with deliberation.

'There's been an oversicht aboot Jamie's legs, but there's naething wrang wi' his tongue,' and it was the general judgment

that it did not 'shackle.' Jamie's gift of speech was much aided by his eyes—blue, steely eyes, the colour of a Scottish loch in sunshine, with a north-east wind blowing—a keen, merciless, penetrating blue. Fallacies, cant, false sentiment, shrivelled up before their gaze. Jamie had a way of watching an eloquent stranger till the man's sentences fell to pieces and died away into murmurs, before he said, 'Ay, ay,' that was very effective; and when he repeated this deliverance after a pause of thirty seconds, the most dull hearer understood that he had been listening to nonsense.

It seems but yesterday that Milton (so called from his farm)—who had come to Drumtochty a month before from Muirtown, and visited the two churches for two months to detect errors—was explaining to a group of villagers the signs of true religion, when he caught Jamie's eye, and fell away into the weather; and the minister of Kildrummie's son, who was on one occasion winding up his sermon with an incredible anecdote, came under the spell at the distance of the pulpit, and only saved himself by giving out a psalm.

Every man requires room for the play of his genius, and it was generally agreed that Jamie, who had pricked many wind-bags, came to his height in dealing with Milton.

'Milton wes faithfu' wi' ye in the third cairriage, comin' up frae the Junction on Friday nicht, a 'm hearin',' he said to Drumsheugh one day. 'The fouk say ye were that affeckit ye cud hairdly gi'e yir ticket up.'

'He 's the maist barefaced wratch that 's ever been seen in the Glen,' replied Drumsheugh. 'He 'll ask ye questions nae man hes ony richt tae pit tae neebur. An' a wakely cratur as weel, greetin' an' whinin' like a bairn.'

'A 'm astonished at ye,' said Jamie in grave rebuke, 'an' you an elder. Ye sud be thankfu' sic a gude man hes come tae the pairish. There 's naething but dry banes, he says; but he 's expeckin' tae roose us afore he 's dune. He 's no feared, a 'll admit; but a 'm no' sure that he 's wakely. Ye didna hear o' him an' his pairtner in the cloth-shop at Muirtown?

'Weel, ye see, the pairtner pit in five hundert, an' Milton pit in five, an' they cairried on business for sax year thegither.

They separated laist spring, an' Milton cam' oot wi' a thoosand an' the pairtner wi' naething.

'Milton hed been sairly tried wi' the ither man's warldliness, walkin' on Sabbath, an' sic-like, an' he was sayin' in the train that he felt like Jacob wi' Esau all the time. It 's graund tae ha'e the poo'er o' Bible illustration. A thoosand wud juist stock Milton fine, an' leave a note or twa in the bank.

'Providence, ye ken, watches ower thae simple-minded craturs, an' it 's juist wunnerfu' hoo they come aff in the end. But a 'm dootin' that he 's no strong; he hes tae tak' care o' himsel'. He cairried a box in his hand Friday a week, an' pit it ablow the seat in the cairriage; it wes aboot auchteen inches square an' nine deep, an' markit "Hogg's Patent Soap." Thae new soaps are brittle; a' dinna wunner he wes carefu'. Ye sud ha'e heard him on the drinkin' at Muirtown market, an' the duty o' total abstinence; he wantit Hillocks tae tak' the pledge at the Junction, but Drumtochty fouk 's dour an ill tae manage.

'Milton wes that agitat when he got tae Kildrummie that he lat his box fa' on the platform. A' wes juist wunnerin' whether they sell soap in bottles noo, when he said, "It 's ma medeecine, for the circulation o' the blood; a 'm a frail vessel." A' thocht that we micht ha'e been kinder tae Milton, an' him sic a sufferer. Twelve quart bottles is a sair allowance o' medeecine for ae puir man;' and a far-away look came into Jamie's face.

But it was on one of our rare public occasions that he made history, and two of his exploits are still subject of grateful recollection, and a bond between Drumtochty men in foreign parts. One was the vote of thanks to the temperance lecturer who had come, with the best intentions, to reform the Glen, and who, with the confidence of a youthful southron, and a variable hold of the letter aitch, used great freedom of speech. He instructed us all, from Doctor Davidson in the chair down to the smith, whom he described as 'an intelligent hartisan,' and concluded with a pointed appeal to Domsie to mend his ways and start a Band of Hope in his school.

'Solomon says, "Train hup a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will never depart from it;" and I 'll apply the words to the Glen of Drumtochty, 'Train hup a child

to 'ate the bottle, and when he is old he 'll never depart from it;"' and the lecturer sat down in a silence that might be heard.

There was something approaching a rustle when Jamie rose to propose a vote of thanks—several charging themselves with snuff in haste, that a word might not be lost—and no one was disappointed.

'Doctor Davidson an' neeburs,' said Jamie, 'it wadna be richt that this young gentleman sud come sae far o' his ain accord an' gi'e us sic a faithfu' address withoot oor thanks, although he 'll excuse us puir country-fouk for no' bein' able to speak his beautiful English.

'We a' admired his ingenious application o' Proverbs, an' he may be sure that nane o' us 'ill forget that new proverb as lang as we live; a' micht say that it 'ill be a household word in the Glen.

'Gin it 's no' presumption tae say it, it 's verra interestin' tae see hoo much experience the lecturer hes for his years in the up-bringin' o' bairns, and a' mak' nae doot the learned bodies in the Glen, as weel as the parents, 'ill lay his words tae heart.

'There wes a man in a glen near-bye'—modestly offering an anecdote for the lecturer's future use—'at wes ill, an' the doctor, wha wes a verra ignorant man, said he wud need a small tastin' tae keep up his strength. But the man wes of the lecturer's persuasion, and wud drink nothing but water. The weather wes terrible cold, and one day, juist five minutes aifter he hed his mornin' gless o' water, the man died. When they opened him it wes found that he hed frozen up inch by inch, and the laist gless hed juist turned tae ice in his throat. It wes sic a noble instance o' conscientious adherence tae principle that a' thocht a' wud mention it for the lecturer's encouragement.' And when Jamie sat down the audience were looking before them with an immovable countenance, and the doctor held out his silver snuff-box to Jamie afterwards with marked consideration.

It is, however, generally agreed that Jamie's most .felicitous stroke was his guileless response to the humiliating invitation of a lay preacher, who had secured the use of the Free Kirk, and held a meeting under Milton's auspices.

'Now, my dear friends,' said the good man, a half-pay Indian

Colonel, with a suspicion of sunstroke, 'all who wish to go to heaven, stand up;' and Drumtochty rose in a solid mass, except Lachlan Campbell, who considered the preacher ignorant of the very elements of doctrine, and Jamie, who was making a study of Milton with great enjoyment.

Much cheered by this earnest spirit, the Colonel then asked any man (or woman) who wished to go elsewhere to declare himself after the same fashion.

No one moved for the space of thirty seconds, and the preacher was about to fall back on general exhortation, when Jamie rose in his place and stood with great composure.

'You surely did not understand what I said, my aged friend.'

Jamie indicated that he had thoroughly grasped the Colonel's meaning.

'Do you really mean that you are ready to . . . go . . . where I mentioned?'

'A'm no' anxious for sic a road,' said Jamie blandly, 'but a' cudna bear tae see ye stan'in' alane, an' you a stranger in the pairish!'

(From *The Days of Auld Lang Syne*, by kind permission of the author.)

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## AN EPISODE.—David Lawson Johnstone.

(*Abridged for Recitation.*)

'This is a charming spot—for two,' he said, settling himself comfortably at her feet.

'We are lucky to find it unoccupied,' she said, 'especially at one of Mrs Gurdon's garden-parties. She will be pleased. I don't believe there is a square inch of the lawn to be seen.'

'The whole world is here. I know, Miss Lindsay; I have shaken hands with it.'

'It is one of the penalties of being a great author.'

'Or of being notorious?'

'You are too modest, Mr Holland. Have you not shared the honours of the afternoon with the Prince and the latest lion—just imported from South Africa, was it not?'

'And felt like a martyr all the time. But there you have the proof, Miss Lindsay. Don't think I am complaining. Fame and notoriety mean the same—in London. And in this'—he indicated the screen of shrubbery which cut off the little nook from the rest of the garden, but did not shut out the strains of the Blue Hungarians or the hum of many voices—'in this I have my reward. I forgive the lion-hunters.'

'It *is* a relief to be out of it,' she admitted. 'Do you know, Mr Holland, that these nooks—yes, there are more of them—are a pet idea of Mrs Gurdon's?'

'I must thank her. She is a woman of genius.'

She laughed merrily. 'Oh no! she is only an incorrigible match-maker—and finds them useful.'

'So she, at least, believes in love?' he asked, picking up the thread of a former conversation.

'Or in marriage. It is not always the same thing, is it?'

'It should be,' he replied, with an air of the deepest conviction. He was looking up into her eyes.

'What does somebody say?—that in woman love is a disease; in man it is an episode.'

'I seem to recollect that,' he said. 'But it is nonsense; love cannot be summed up in an epigram.'

Again she laughed. 'I am afraid you have a very bad memory, Mr Holland. Is it another of the penalties of—notoriety?'

'In my case I am afraid so. Is Meredith the culprit?'

'I must leave that to your conscience, sir. The sentiment appears in a brilliant study of society, entitled *Providence and Mrs Grundy*, for which, if the title-page is to be trusted'——

'Ah! I remember now. Please spare me, Miss Lindsay. You don't know the evil effects of phrase-making—it saps a man's morals until he has not even a nodding acquaintance with the truth. And you have taken your revenge.'

'But, really, Mr Holland, I trusted to your—your knowledge of human nature, shall I say? I was glad, for my own sake'——

'For what, if I may ask?'

'That "in man it was an episode." It makes life so much easier to believe so.'

'You will let me retract in sackcloth and ashes, Miss Lindsay?

Honestly, I have some reason to do so. It is three years since I wrote that miserable book. Can you not guess my excuse?'

'It seems to infer a compliment—somewhere,' she said, rather doubtfully.

'I am very much in earnest,' he said, getting up and standing above her; 'I didn't know you then. If I had, the thing—call it an epigram if you like—would never have been written. How could it, when——?'

Here the bushes were parted, and a face—a tanned, handsome, open face—showed in the interstices. Miss Lindsay nodded brightly.

'Come in, Ralph,' she said.

'Very sorry, I'm sure,' said the new-comer. 'I didn't know, Nell'—— Then he disappeared.

Miss Lindsay smiled.

'Captain Havelock seems—out of sorts,' remarked her companion, sitting down again.

'Probably he is looking for my mother,' said she. 'I told him to attend to her.'

'He is a capital fellow,' he said indifferently. 'Done something in India, hasn't he?'

'A small affair of outposts,' she replied, in the same tone. 'He held a fort somewhere on the frontier for a fortnight against a couple of thousand tribesmen, with only a European sergeant and fifty Sikhs under him; and he was reduced to thirty rounds of ammunition and no provisions before he was relieved. It is quite a common thing out there. He told me so himself.'

'He is modest—as well as lucky,' said Holland. 'You and he are old friends, Miss Lindsay?'

'We were brought up together.'

'Like brother and sister?'

'Exactly. We quarrel quite as much, at least.'

'And make it up, I dare say? But I am sure the quarrels are not serious. *Apropos*, am I forgiven?'

'Was there a crime, Mr Holland? Really, I have forgotten.'

'We were discussing'——

'George Meredith, was it not?'

'Then I am *not* forgiven for that unfortunate fault of my youth?

You are very hard, Miss Lindsay. You have taught me the error of my ways, and yet you refuse to credit the conversion! How can I convince you? I am quite serious'——

'Oh! I hope not,' she said. 'It is too warm for anything but frivolity. There is a green thing on your coat, Mr Holland,' she went on.

'Thanks.' He flicked the insect off. 'I have something to say, Miss Lindsay—a kind of confession. It is stupid; but I don't quite know how to say it.'

'Is it necessary?' she asked innocently. 'I don't like confessions, Mr Holland. We are Low Church people.'

'It means a lot to me,' he continued, and again there was silence. Then he rose for the second time, perhaps feeling that an upright position conduces to a proper dignity.

She perceived her opening, and rose also. 'It *is* time we were returning,' she remarked.

'Don't go just yet, Miss Lindsay,' he pleaded, putting out a hand to detain her. 'I want you to listen to me for a moment. I won't keep you if'——

But already she was half-hidden by the shrubbery. He had perforce to follow.

'It seems more crowded than ever,' she said as they picked their way through the throng. 'Ah! there are my mother and Captain Havelock. Shall we join them?—I hope you are attending to your duties, Ralph? Mr Holland and I have been discussing Meredith—and things. Tired, mother? Oh! you must be. Mr Holland, will you find my mother a seat somewhere—near the band, if you can? The Hungarians are so good.'

'Delighted,' he replied. Then lower: 'I may see you again before you go, Miss Lindsay? I may call to-night, then? I need not tell you what it is—perhaps you can guess—I—I hope so.'

'I think it would be better not to come, Mr Holland,' she replied, giving him her hand. 'I am sorry, but—will you oblige me by considering the episode as closed? I am engaged to Captain Havelock.'

## THE LITTLE HATCHET STORY: WITH OCCASIONAL QUESTIONS BY A FIVE-YEAR-OLD HEARER.—ANON.

We have an unbounded capacity for pleasing children, and when Mrs Caruthers requested us one day to amuse her little son while she paid a visit, we graciously consented. Taking the child upon our knee we began:

'George Washington was the greatest man that ever lived.'

And so, smiling, we went on.

'Well, one day, George's father'——

'George who?' asked Clarence.

'George Washington. He was a little boy then, just like you. One day his father'——

'Whose father?' demanded Clarence, with an encouraging expression of interest.

'George Washington's—this great man we are telling you of. One day George Washington's father gave him a little hatchet for a'——

'Gave who a little hatchet?' the dear child interrupted, with a gleam of bewitching intelligence. Most men would have got mad or betrayed signs of impatience; but we didn't. We know how to talk to children. So we went on:

'George Washington. His'——

'Who gave him the little hatchet?'

'His father. And his father'——

'Whose father?'

'George Washington's.'

'Oh!'

'Yes, George Washington. And his father told him'——

'Told who?'

'Told George.'

'Oh yes—George.'

And we went on, just as patient and as pleasant as you could imagine. We took up the story right where the boy interrupted, for we could see he was just crazy to hear the end of it. We said:

'And he was told'——

'George told him?' queried Clarence.

'No; his father told George.'

'Oh!'

'Yes; told him he must be careful with the hatchet'——

'Who must be careful?'

'George must.'

'Oh!'

'Yes; must be careful with his hatchet'——

'What hatchet?'

'Why, George's.'

'Oh!'

'With the hatchet, and not cut himself with it, or drop it in the cistern, or leave it out in the grass all night. So George went round cutting everything he could reach with his hatchet. And at last he came to a splendid apple-tree, his father's favourite, and cut it down, and'——

'Who cut it down?'

'George did.'

'Oh!'

'But his father came home and saw it the first thing, and'——

'Saw the hatchet?'

'No; saw the apple-tree. And he said, "Who has cut down my favourite apple-tree?"'

'What apple-tree?'

'George's father's. And everybody said they didn't know anything about it, and'——

'Anything about what?'

'The apple-tree.'

'Oh!'

'And George came up and heard them talking about it'——

'Heard who talking about it?'

'Heard his father and the men.'

'What were they talking about?'

'About this apple-tree.'

'What apple-tree?'

'The favourite tree that George cut down.'

'George who?'

'George Washington.'

'Oh!'

'So George came up and heard them talking about it, and he'——

'What did he cut it down for?'

'Just to try his little hatchet.'

'Whose little hatchet?'

'Why, his own—the one his father gave him.'

'Gave who?'

'Why, George Washington.'

'Oh!'

'So George came up, and he said, "Father, I cannot tell a lie. I"'——

'Who couldn't tell a lie?'

'Why, George Washington. He said, "Father, I cannot tell a lie. It was"'——

'His father couldn't.'

'Why, no; George couldn't.'

'Oh! George! Oh yes!'

'"It was I cut down your apple-tree; I did"'——

'His father did?'

'No, no; it was George said this.'

'Said he cut his father?'

'No, no, no; said he cut down his apple-tree.'

'George's apple-tree?'

'No, no; his father's.'

'Oh!'

'He said'——

'His father said?'

'No, no, no; George said, "Father, I cannot tell a lie; I did it with my little hatchet." And his father said, "Noble boy, I would rather lose a thousand trees than have you tell a lie."'

'George did?'

'No; his father said that.'

'Said he'd rather have a thousand apple-trees?'

'No, no, no; said he'd rather lose a thousand apple-trees than'——

'Said he'd rather George would?'

'No; said he 'd rather he would than have him lie.'

'Oh! George would rather have his father lie?'

We are patient, and we love children; but if Mrs Caruthers hadn't come and got her prodigy at that critical juncture, we don't believe all Burlington could have pulled us out of the snarl. And as Clarence Alençon de Marchemont Caruthers pattered down the stairs we heard him telling his ma about a boy who had a father named George, and he told him to cut down an apple-tree, and he said he 'd rather tell a thousand lies than cut down one apple-tree.

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## A JOURNEY TO STARSTON.

### A Rendering of a 'Fantaisie' by M. Charles Croz, taken from the 'Saynètes et Monologues.'

The Traveller *enters briskly.*

Pardon me, gentlemen, if I am a little late. I have but this moment come off a journey. A delightful little journey it has been! Picture to yourselves a village—no, a town—rather a large town, one hour, two hours, or at most three hours from London (I don't know precisely the distance, for I forgot to look at the time when I started, and also when I arrived; besides, I was asleep all the way). I started on account of some business matters—but they would not interest you. I brought my small portmanteau, for I always find that I leave my heavy luggage either in the train or somewhere else; but my small portmanteau I hold in my hand, thus, and I never put it down; I get into the train, I get out, and, as you see, I never can lose it. (*Looking with astonishment first at his empty hand, and then at the audience.*) Why, this is the first time such a thing has happened to me. Well, to be sure! I must have left it on the platform, and I must go back immediately and make inquiries for it. It will not be difficult to find a leathern portmanteau, or rather one covered with that sort of cloth, don't you know? It has a good many nails, a great many nails all over it. I shall soon find it; no doubt it is on the platform; the porter will be sure to remember

me. I started from the platform for the North—no, by the by, it must have been the South-Eastern, or rather, the South-Western; the fact is, I can't say which, for I'm not a seafaring man—I don't know the points of the compass. The fellows you meet in seaports screw up their eyes and shake their heads, and tell you 'It is sou'-sou'-west.' Well, that is their business. The platform from whence I started is close to a wide street where there is a great deal of traffic—a frightful amount of traffic. I shall be able to tell you the name of it presently; I must remember it if I want to get back my portmanteau. (*Looking at his empty hand.*) I assure you it is the very first time such a thing has happened to me!

Well, then, I started from the—the platform; never mind which; let's get on; and off we go. It is very pretty about there. I should think it must be very pretty all the way, but I went to sleep after the first station. The first station is—I remember the name—it has something to do with *ham*. That will be a help to me in finding the platform.

Ah, if you are fond of travelling you ought to go in that direction. To my mind there is nothing so delightful as travelling, especially in that way. I went to sleep; I heard indistinct cries of names ending in *ham*, *ton*, *ford*, &c. I have no memory for names, but of course I bore in mind the name of the place for which I was bound. It is—dear, dear—I have it at the tip of my tongue. It is such a very pretty country. Well, I'll tell you in a minute what it is. So I woke up, and got out of the train. You really ought to go by that line; it is very picturesque.

As for the station, don't you know, it is like all the other stations. Very nice, all the same. There is a sort of wooden paling entirely covered with advertisement boards of all colours—red boards, and blue, and green, and yellow; they have a very pretty effect.

It is a good step to the town, and there is a little omnibus which takes you there.

Travelling is very amusing, especially in that direction. Of course from the omnibus I inspected the landscape; it is very picturesque. On the right there are fields—well, yes, fields of mangold-wurzel, or wheat, or barley. I am no hand at botany;

I leave that to the farmers. There are people who see something growing, and say directly, 'That is barley, that is oats, that is clover.' But I don't know one from another. However, on the right there was a great deal of mangold-wurzel; it has a very pretty effect; it is very picturesque. And then there is the road along which the omnibus goes, much like other roads, and yet not exactly like other roads. For there is a house, a small white house with a green veranda. You have no idea how pretty a green veranda looks with a small white house.

On the left—stop; ah yes, I think I see it—on the left there were more fields, and fields of mangold-wurzel; these fields on the right, these fields on the left, all this mangold-wurzel, it is very pretty, very picturesque, I assure you.

The omnibus sets you down at the hotel, the principal hotel in the market-place. It is the 'Red Lion;' no, the 'Red Boar;' no—well, it is something red.

I was quite aware that there is another hotel close by, also something red; but you must go to the one of which I speak; it is the best. You will easily know which it is; go there on my recommendation. The people who keep it are very attentive; I had no trouble at all. They at once gave me a room on the first floor, or on the second—I don't know which. If you go there, ask to have that very room; it is No. 7—no—3—no—I can't remember; but they'll give it you: they are very attentive. It is a very nice room!

The chambermaid carried up my portmanteau (provoking that I have mislaid it; I must go and look for it presently). She was rather nice, that chambermaid. She said civilly, 'Good-day, sir. Have you had a comfortable journey, sir?' And what eyes she had! They were blue, or black, or green, I can't say which. You don't suppose that I notice the colour of people's eyes? There are persons who will tell you that a certain lady is tall, or short, or fair, or dark. What does it matter, provided that she is pretty? I don't profess to remember all these little details.

When you go there you must manage to get that room. It is very nice! In the first place, there is a bed with white curtains; there are also white curtains to the window; there is a table, and two—no, three chairs. Ah, and there is also an arm-chair; the

arm-chair is rather uncomfortable, but when you are travelling you must not be too particular.

The chambermaid opened the window (she was rather nice, that girl). She opened the window to let in a little air. There is a very pretty view from it. It looks into the market-place. Just opposite is the Commercial Club, or the Union—no, I think it is the Literary Institute. It is the best reading-room in the place; and you can get a cup of tea there. I went across to get a cup of tea. I found a lot of people there. You must be sure to go there, and you 'll easily know it, for there is a billiard-table. That is the place to see the natives, their ways and their costumes. So there I found people in smock-frocks and people in velveteen jackets. The country people about there dress very oddly, but it is very pretty. They are very nice people, though. I heard them chatting about their business matters. They talk very well —they talked, don't you know, about the price of corn, about the hay, about buying and selling cattle, about oxen and calves, nineteen to the dozen! There was one big fellow in a smock-frock, with a whip. I think he must have been a jockey, for I heard him say, 'When I buys a horse, I wants it to be a horse; because if it ain't a horse, why, a horse is what I wants.'

I assure you it is a very pretty part of the country; you really ought to go there. Then I dined at the hotel, at the *table d'hôte.* Perhaps you don't know what a *table d'hôte* is. They are rather curious, especially that one. Go there and see; go on my recommendation. There is a table in a long room—a table shaped like a long square—no, I think it was round, or rather oval; never mind, it does not matter. I can eat just as well on a square table as on a round one.

I don't remember what I had for dinner. There were soup and joints; on the whole I did very well. The people at table conversed, and conversed very nicely. They talked about—don't you know?—what was it? I remember the gentleman opposite me thought that I differed from him in opinion; so he said nothing more, but ate away with his nose plunged into his plate.

The discussion afterwards became more lively. I should have stayed for it, but the omnibus came to take me to my business appointment. I had the omnibus all to myself, and I fell asleep,

and slept all the way. And coming back I fell asleep just in the same way. (*He pulls out his watch.*)

Half-past! Half-past what? I don't know. My watch goes capitally, but it has only one hand—the big one, the minute-hand. It does not matter; there is only time to go and inquire for my portmanteau. But how shall I know the platform? I 'll ask a cabman, and if I give him a pint—— (*Puts his hand into his pocket.*) But—my purse! It must be in my portmanteau! Well, mind, if you hear anything about this leathern portmanteau—I should say cloth, with nails—a great many nails—write to me, No. —— Street. Oh, hang it all! it 's no matter; write to me, that 's all; I 'm very well known in the neighbourhood. (*He goes away and comes back.*) Be sure to put my Christian name, because there 's another fellow next door whose surname is the same as mine.

(By kind permission of Messrs R. Bentley & Son.)

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## MULCAHY AND THE CODFISH.—JARROLD.

Night and the customary pastoral content of peaceful industry had fallen upon the hamlet of Coney Island. The moon was playing peek-a-boo from behind the flying clouds. Mrs Finn was peeling potatoes. Little Mike was scratching the billy-goat's back with a stick, and Michael Finn, sen., was seated on the back stoop burning tobacco and obscuring the moon with smoke, when a solitary pedestrian was seen silhouetted against the western sky on his way up the Old Point road. He wore a cardigan jacket and an air of dejection. His pipe smouldered and went out, his shoulders drooped, and there was a suspicion of moisture upon his cheek. He lifted the latch of the gate leading to the Finn shanty and walked in, closing it behind him with what might have appeared to a disinterested observer as unnecessary care.

Mr Finn greeted his visitor with the single word out of his condition of dreamy content and tobacco-smoke :

'Patsey!'

'Mike!' was the equally brief reply.

Both men looked at the moon for five minutes without speaking. Then Patsey broke the silence with:

'Mat Mulcahy is dead.'

Mike started and shifted his pipe to the other side of his capacious mouth.

'Whin did he die?' he asked.

'The breath wint out of him at five o'clock this day, an' hum l'avin a widdy and wan child.'

'Ah, poor man! he died of a broken heart, I suppose,' said Mr Finn.

'Faith, he did not, thin,' replied Patsey, bridling with a consciousness of superior knowledge. 'He's afther dying of malary, which he kotch in the quarry.'

'Ye may think ye know fwhat killed Mulcahy, Patsey; but 'twas no disease, and I'm tellin' ye as knows him since he cu'd walk under a jackass widout stoopin'. Mulcahy died all on account of a codfish!'

'Saints presarve us!' exclaimed Patsey. 'I suppose ye'll be sayin' he swallyed a bone.'

'No. He swallyed neither fish nor fin nor bone of the codfish,' said Mike impressively. 'He hadn't the codfish on his stomach, but on his mind.'

'Go wan!' exclaimed Patsey, with disdain; 'how cud a man have a codfish on his mind?'

'Shure, you wid yer small mind cu'dn't have anything on it,' replied Mike sarcastically.

'Well, well, Mike!' said Patsey impatiently. 'Tell us about the cod. Was it salt or fresh?'

''Twas salt.'

'Was it cuked?'

''Twas not. Raw as bafe-stake. The time that Mulcahy saw it the cod was hanging from the neck of a man in a minstrel show.'

By this time Patsey's curiosity had been aroused to such an extent that he exclaimed impatiently:

'Faix, Mike, will ye tell yer sthory and stop yer mautherin'?'

Mike deliberately filled his pipe, changed his position so that the moon would shine over his left shoulder, 'for luck,' and, turning to his companion, began:

'Ye 'll mind, Patsey, that Mulcahy and meself kem from the same town of Naas in Kildare. Mul was young and giddy, and so was meself fur that matther. The two of us used to be goin' to all the dances and wakes and parties. Whiniver a show kem to town Mul always wint jist fur divarshun, and to l'arn new jig steps. Fur ye must know, Patsey, that Mul cu'd shake his fut wid the best of 'em. Well, wan night there was a minstrel show in town, and, of coorse, Mul was thare wid clane hands and a new necktie. What wid the jiggin' and tumblin' and jokin', Mul was near crazy wid deloight, whin what should he see comin' out on the stage forninst him but a black nagur wid a codfish hangin' from his neck wid a string. Thare sat Mul, wid his mouth and ears open like a cellar dure, a-listenin' for the joke he knew well was comin'.'

Patsey was leaning forward and listening with close attention. When Mike stopped to take breath he exclaimed eagerly:

'Well, Mike, fwhat thin?'

'You know, and I know, and every man knows, that thim minstrel min has it all med up afore they comes out on the stage, Patsey. So that accounts fur the way the man as axes the questions says to the man as had the codfish, says he:

'"Faith, man, fwhat are ye doin' wid the fish?"

'Then the man as had the cod rowled his eyes in his head, and winked, and luked wise like Solomon, and says, says he:

'"Ah, it's only a cod," says he; fur ye must know, Patsey, that ivery wan was sayin' that same in the sthreet. 'Twar jist the same as ye 'll be hearin' the b'ys shoutin', "Ah, there!" d'ye moind, Patsey?'

'Ah, I do,' replied Patsey. 'And fwhat thin?'

'Well,' continued Mike, 'there was a grate laugh all over the house, and Mike was filled wid laughter like a bucket at the well. He roared and whacked the flure, an' kept sayin' to himself over an' over, "Oh dear, it's on'y a cod! Bad luck to that black nagur! It's on'y a cod! Oh dear! oh dear!" Then he shrieked wid laughin'! Be jabers! he got that bad they had to put him out. They thought he was crazy.'

'Begorra, I can't see how the codfish killed Mulcahy,' said Patsey impatiently.

'Av coorse ye can't, ye thickhead,' said Mike angrily. 'Ye'll keep yer mouth shut, or I'll not tell ye any more about the cod or Mulcahy either.'

'Arrah, I was only jokin', Mike; go wan wid yer sthory,' said Patsey soothingly. Mike resumed after a few minutes' moody silence.

'Well, the minstrels wint away, but Mul couldn't forget the cod. He'd be goin' along the sthreet sayin' to himself and laughin', "It's on'y a cod," until wan day an idee kem to him. Says he to himsel', says he, "Musha, but I'll make a joke mesel'," says he. So fwhat does he do, but he goes to the Widdy Murphy's shanty and buys a kid for a shillen, an' walks down the main sthreet in the village with the kid in his arrums.'

'Fwhat was thare quare about that?' said Patsey.

'Ye must know that Mul thought whin he'd meet a friend the first question the friend wud ask would be, "Mul, fwhat are ye doin' wid the baste?" Then Mul, of coorse, jist like the minstrel nagur, wud rowl his eyes and say, "Oh, it's on'y a kid," d'ye moind, Patsey?'

'I do,' replied Patsey, with an appreciative smile.

'The first man he met was Paddy Feeney.

'"It's a foine kid ye have thare, Mul," says Paddy.

'"Faix, it is that," says Mul, achen to have Paddy ask fwhat he was doin' wid the baste, so as he cud say, "Oh, it's on'y a kid," d'ye moind, Patsey?

'But Paddy axed him where he got the kid an' how much he ped for it, and was he goin' to make kidney stew of it; but niver a chance did he give Mul to crack his little joke. 'Twas rough on Mul, Patsey; but all the afthernoon he carried the kid in his arrums, waitin' fur some wan to ax him fwhat he was doing wid the kid, so he could make his little joke; but he had no show. He tuk the kid home, and it grew to be a big nanny. Thin Mul kem over to this counthry and settled on Cooney Island. Ivery wanst in a while Mul 'ud buy a new kid and try to get some wan to ax him the question as 'ud put him out of his misery and take the saycret sorrow from him. But the question that he longed for niver came. And that's fwhat killed him. Just moind fwhat I tell yer. He died, me friend, of a broken heart.'

## DE SMITH AND THE TELEPHONE.—ANON.

De Smith rang his telephone-bell gently.

'Hullo, Central!' he murmured.

A patient wait and no answer.

'Hullo, Central!' a trifle louder.

No response. Another ring—longer than the first.

'Hullo, Central!'

De Smith's voice was slightly tinged with exasperation.

Silence still; and the receiver rasped as De Smith's fierce breath struck the transmitter.

'Hullo! hullo! hullo!—great blazes!'

There came no answering voice, and De Smith rang savagely for fifteen minutes by the clock.

'What do you mean by ringing that way?' asked a feminine voice.

'I mean that I won't wait three hours on you; that's what I mean. My time's worth something.'

'Didn't wait three hours.'

'Know better. Give me five one naught three.'

'Six seven two one.'

'Who said anything about six seven two one? I want five one naught three—five'——

'Five one nine three.

'Naught, naught three.'

'Ting-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling.'

'Hullo!'

'Hullo!' returned De Smith. 'Is Mr Johnson there?'

'Wait a minute.'

De Smith waited ten minutes, and it seemed like ten hours. At last a ring and an answer.

'Hullo, there!'

'Hullo, Johnson! Say! send over'——

'Who do you want?'

'Johnson, Johnson—ain't your name Johnson?'

'No; my name's Thompson.'

'Send Johnson to the telephone.'

'No Johnson here.'

'What! Aren't you Brown, Jones, & Robinson?'

'No; we're Hngx & Tzwxson.'

'Who?'

'Lrptw & Xtwpson.'

'Spell it.'

'Huh-bler-cl—stuh-a-nd'——

'What's your number?'

'Fifty-one ninety-three.'

'Great Cæsar's ghost!'

De Smith dropped the receiver and fell back against the door. When he recovered he went at the telephone again.

'Hullo, Central!'

'Hullo! hullo! hullo! Say, what do you want, anyway?'

'Ring off—I want Central.'

'There's—no—Johnson—here.'

'I didn't say there was!' howled De Smith. 'Ring off. Hullo, Central!'

'Who are you?'

De Smith danced a hornpipe around the telephone and then rang the bell furiously.

'Hullo, Central! Where the Old Nick are you? Hullo! hullo! hullo!'

'Stop your yellin'! This is Thompson at the telephone.'

'Go to Halifax, Thompson! Will you ring off? I don't want you.'

'What's that? Don't talk so loud—I can't hear you.'

'Don't care whether you hear me or not. I'm blamed'——

'Get back from your telephone.'

De Smith gasped, put his receiver in the fork, hung to it with all his strength, and rang his bell until he wore out the battery.

'Hullo, Central!' he murmured in a husky whisper.

His eyes were bulging from his head and life seemed a dreary waste.

'Do you want Gext & Pgwson?'

'No,' came the strangely mild and husky whisper; 'I want Central.'

'There 's no Johnson here, I tell you.'

'Ha! ha! ha!'

Poor De Smith. They took him from that telephone to an asylum, and he amuses himself there with an old door-knob. He holds it to his ear, and is constantly calling for 5103 through the ventilator.

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## A SLIGHT MISTAKE.—Archibald Eyre.

'Marriage is the saving of a young man,' said my aunt Tabitha sententiously.

I assented, for I find it pays to give a ready acquiescence to abstract propositions.

'You must marry,' continued my aunt.

I hesitated, for to assent to the concrete is more dangerous.

'I am still very young,' I said meekly.

My aunt turned to my mother. 'Whom shall Alfred marry?'

My mother shook her head.

'Somebody nice,' she volunteered.

'What do you say to Letitia Brownlow?' asked my aunt.

'I would prefer to say nothing to Letitia Brownlow,' I interposed hastily.

'Or Amelia Stafforth?'

'Is she not rather'—— my mother waved one hand; 'and Alfred is so slim.'

'*I* think she has a very fine figure,' responded my aunt. 'Or there is Gertrude Williams; she will have a fortune if she outlives her sisters.'

'There are only five of them,' I said hopefully.

'Or Mabel Gordon?'

'She has taken a course of cooking lessons,' observed my mother.

'No, none of these,' I cried decisively.

My aunt looked offended.

'Very well, then; choose for yourself,' she said tartly.

'Perhaps that would help,' I remarked thoughtfully.

'You will choose somebody nice, won't you, Alfred?' said my mother.

'With money,' observed my aunt.

'Well connected,' emphasised my mother.

'Not too young,' added my aunt.

'And religious,' begged my mother.

'There is no objection to her being good-looking?' I asked, a trifle timidly.

'No, I think not,' said my aunt, 'provided she fully understands beauty is but skin-deep.'

'I will tell her,' I murmured.

'Well,' said my aunt impatiently after a short pause, 'whom do you suggest?'

I thought for a moment.

'What do you say to Winifred Fraser?'

'That minx!' cried my aunt.

'Oh Alfred!' echoed my mother.

'Why not?' I asked.

'Such a dreadful family!' said my mother.

'So fast!' interjected my aunt.

'But have you ever noticed the sun on her hair?' I asked innocently.

My aunt drew herself up.

'We have not noticed the sun on her hair,' she said with much dignity; 'nor do we wish to observe the sun on her hair.'

I was justly annoyed. 'I really think it must be Winifred Fraser,' I said. 'She is very fond of me, and'——

'How can you be so cruel to me?' cried my mother. 'Have you noticed how gray my hair is getting? You will not have me long.' She drew out her handkerchief.

'You will come to a bad end,' said my aunt. 'I always thought you were depraved. If you marry that painted hussy, you must not expect my countenance.'

'Under the circumstances, I will not marry Winifred Fraser,' I said, with great magnanimity, for I did not particularly want my aunt's countenance.

My aunt sniffed. 'You had better not.'

'I merely joked,' I said soothingly, remembering she had not made her will.

'Indeed!'

'The truth is'—I dropped my voice—'I am in love with some one else.'

'And you never told me!' said my mother reproachfully.

'The girl I love is not free.'

'Married!' cried my aunt.

'Not married—but engaged.'

'Who is it?' asked my mother gently.

I was silent for a moment, and then I sighed.

'It is Constance Burleigh.'

'It would have been a most suitable match,' murmured my mother.

'Very suitable,' repeated my aunt.

There was a momentary silence, broken by my aunt.

'I did not know Constance was engaged.'

'It is a secret; you must not repeat what I have told you.'

'I don't like these secret engagements,' said my aunt brusquely. 'Who told you?'

'She told me herself.'

'Who is the man?'

'I do not think I should repeat his name.'

'I hope Constance is not throwing herself away.'

I shook my head doubtfully.

'You know the man?'

I nodded.

'Is he quite—quite'——

Again I shook my head doubtfully.

'What have you heard?' my aunt asked eagerly.

'I don't think I ought to repeat these things.'

'You can surely trust your mother,' murmured my mother.

'And my discretion,' said my aunt.

'Well,' I said, 'I have been told he is cruel to his mother.'

'Really!' cried the two ladies in a breath.

'His mother told me so herself.'

'How sad!' said my mother.

'And what else?' asked my aunt.

'Another relation of his told me he was depraved.'

'Poor, poor Constance!' whispered my mother.

'And would probably end badly.'

'I expect he drinks,' said my aunt grimly.

'Does Constance know this?' asked my mother.

'I don't think so.'

'You did not tell her?'

'Of course not.'

'I consider it is your duty to.'

'I really cannot.'

'Then I will,' said my aunt resolutely.

'What I have said has been in confidence.'

'I do not care.'

'I beg you not to do so.'

'It is my duty. I am too fond of Constance to allow her to throw herself away on this worthless man.'

I shrugged my shoulders. 'Do as you please, but don't mention my name. By the way, Constance said she would probably call this afternoon.'

At that moment the bell rang.

'That may be her,' said my aunt, flying to the window. 'It is.'

I got up slowly and sauntered into the conservatory which adjoins the drawing room. From behind a friendly palm I could see without being seen. I saw my aunt look towards my mother.

'If we open her eyes,' I heard her whisper, 'it may pave the way for Alfred.'

My mother said nothing, but I saw the same hope shine from her eyes.

The door opened and the servant announced Constance. She came forward with a little eager rush, then stopped short, embarrassed by the want of reciprocity.

'We are glad to see you,' said my mother and kissed her.

My aunt came forward. 'We were just speaking of you,' she said solemnly. 'Sit down.'

Constance looked a little crushed. 'I thought Alfred would have told you,' she murmured.

'We have heard'—— began my aunt.

'Hush!' interposed my mother. 'Come nearer me, Constance. Won't you take off your hat?'

Constance came and sat by her side. 'I was anxious to come and tell you that—that'——

'If you are alluding to your engagement,' said my aunt somewhat severely, 'we have already heard of it.'

'You have heard!' cried Constance.

'With the deepest sorrow.'

Constance drew herself up.

'You do not approve?' she asked proudly.

'We love you too much,' said my mother gently.

Constance looked bewildered.

'You are too good for the wretch,' cried my aunt.

'What! Oh, what do you mean?' exclaimed Constance.

'If you marry this man,' continued my aunt vigorously, 'you will regret it.'

My mother took her hand. 'My sister should not tell you this so suddenly.'

'It is my duty to speak, and I will,' cried my aunt. 'I will not let Constance unite herself to this man with her eyes closed.'

'What have you against him?' demanded Constance, a red spot beginning to burn in each cheek.

'He drinks,' answered my aunt almost triumphantly.

Constance sank back in the cushions.

'I don't believe it,' she said faintly.

'He ill-treats his mother—beats her, I believe,' continued my aunt.

'This cannot be true,' cried Constance. 'Mrs Granville, tell me!'

My mother nodded sadly.

'Alas! I cannot deny it.'

Constance rose. 'This is awful!' she said, holding on to the back of the sofa. 'I could never have believed it.' She put her hand to her forehead. 'It is like a bad dream.'

'My poor, dear Constance,' murmured my mother, rising and putting her arms round her.

My aunt brought up her artillery. 'He is thoroughly depraved, and will come to a bad end. His relations are at one on this point.'

Constance buried her face in my mother's bosom. 'Oh dear, oh dear! and I love him so,' she sobbed.

In the adjoining room I was becoming uncomfortable.

'We thought it right to tell you,' said my aunt, moved by her tears, 'though Alfred begged and implored us not to.'

'I could never, never have believed it,' sobbed Constance. 'Poor, poor Mrs Granville!'

My mother soothed her.

'How difficult you must have felt it to tell me this!' exclaimed Constance, drying her tears. 'It was so good of you. I will not give him another thought. To treat his mother so cruelly! Oh, Mrs Granville, I am so sorry for you!'

'It is I who am sorry for you,' said my mother doubtfully.

'And no one would have dreamed it. We always thought you were so fond of him, and spoiled him so utterly. And all the time you were hiding your sorrow. How noble of you!'

My mother looked at Aunt Tabitha, who returned her stare.

'Who ever is it?' said Aunt Tabitha, whispering. 'Find out.'

'Where did you meet him, dearest?' whispered my mother.

'Meet him? Why, here of course,' said Constance, with opening eyes.

'Yes, yes, of course,' said my mother, mystified.

'I thought you would be so pleased, and I hurried across to tell you.'

'Can Alfred have made a mistake?' muttered my aunt hoarsely.

The two elder ladies stood still in the utmost embarrassment.

'I shall never be happy again,' said Constance mournfully.

'Don't say that,' implored my mother. 'Perhaps there is a mistake.'

'How can there be a mistake?' asked Constance, raising her head.

'There can be no mistake,' said my aunt hastily.

'How could he be cruel to you?' cried Constance, kissing my mother.

'Cruel to me?' cried my mother.

'You said he was cruel to you.'

'Of whom are you speaking?' cried both ladies.

'Of Alfred, of course.'

The two elder ladies sat down suddenly.

'You are not engaged to Alfred?' they gasped simultaneously.

'To whom else?' said Constance, in amazement.

'There is some misunderstanding,' I observed smoothly, coming in at the moment.

The three fell upon me together.

It took at least an hour to explain. Yet I had said nothing which was not strictly true.

'You will not allow these practical jokes when you are married, will you, Conny?' said my mother fondly.

'I will not,' replied Constance, tightening her lips.

'Marriage is the saving of a young man,' repeated my aunt grimly.

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## THE FINANCIAL SHARK.—ANON.

'I suppose,' quoth James T. Gaulin, of Winchester, Mass., who was sitting on the hotel veranda, 'that I had the honour of killing the most valuable fish that ever swam the seas. I did it single-handed, too. I aver that this fish was worth more at the time of its death than the finest sperm whale that was ever harpooned, although we should really leave whales out of the question when speaking of fish. It was thirty years ago, and I was young and foolish enough to be a deep-sea diver. Our diving schooner and crew had been sent to Cuba to try to recover some stuff from a Spanish boat that had foundered off the coast of Cuba, just where I don't now recollect. It was quite a long trip for us; and as the employment of a diving outfit was an expensive thing in those days, the boys knew that there must be something pretty valuable in the hold of the wreck. I was quite close to our skipper, and he told me that there were several boxes of gold coin in the wreck. On our arrival at the port near where the wreck lay in thirty feet of water, the agent of the owners of the sunken schooner told us something more surprising. It was that the gold had not been stowed in boxes in the cabin, as was usual, but for some reason had been bagged and placed in the hold, being billed as copper washers. This was probably a scheme to avoid any chance of the spirit of cupidity arising in the crew, for the treasure was very great.

'As the confidential man, I was selected to go down first and find the money-bags, attach lines to them, and have them taken out before the other divers should proceed with the work of taking out the other freight that the water had not harmed. I was soon in the hold, and was surprised to find that the bags were only a little distance from the hole in the side that had caused the schooner to founder. I had been told that there would be twelve bags, but I could lay my hands on but eleven of them. Finally I spied a torn bag lying near the hole in the hull, and on picking it up discovered that it contained a few gold coins. I decided that the triple sacking had been torn open some way or other when the schooner sank. I fastened lines about the eleven bags that were intact, and had them hoisted, afterwards going up for air, for our apparatus was not very good. In a few minutes I returned to the hold to search for the scattered coins. Very few of them were in sight. It occurred to me that they might have been washed outside the boat, judging from the position of the wreck and the fact that the hole was far down toward the ship's bottom. I was about to crawl out of the hole when I remembered that it might hazard the air-pipe; so I was pulled up and let down again over the vessel's side. I was disappointed not to find any indication of the gold near the hole in the schooner, but set to work digging resolutely in the sand. I had gone a foot down when I struck the gold pieces all in a lump. I picked out a great handful and turned the light on them, for I was a lover of gold then, even though it did not belong to me.

'Just then I saw something that made the rubber helmet rise from my head. It was a man-eating shark. I hadn't thought of one, so I had neglected to bring my knife. It was rushing at me. The stupid creature never stopped to consider that with a rubber and lead dressing a diver makes a poor lunch. I was kneeling beside the gold. At the shark's onslaught I naturally hung to the handful of gold as though to use it as a weapon. He turned on his side, opening his horrible mouth. A feeling of grim humour had come over me. The cruel gold bugs had sent me down here to be devoured, after saving thousands of dollars for them. I would be a spendthrift at the

last. So with all my force I flung the heavy handful of coin into the yawning mouth.

'The shark must have thought it was a part of me, for he snapped his jaws over the golden morsel. I am satisfied that he broke some teeth. He swam back a little, and then rushed at me again. I had no weapon but the gold, so again I flung into the hideous maw enough to buy me a home in New England. I saw him snap and swallow it. Again and again was the attack repeated, and as often did I hurl gold into the shark's throat. Pretty soon he became dizzy, as it were, for the gold had unbalanced him, settling in the forward part of his body. Then he writhed in agony, and I had to keep dodging his flurry. Then, with one terrible shudder, he sank to the bottom, weighed down by the gold. I tied a line about him, and then gave the signal to be pulled up. Then I helped to hoist the shark. We cut him open. Gentlemen, you must take the word of an ex-diver that there was £10,000 in him. Gold had killed him.'

Silence spread itself all over the veranda. The pale moon slid behind a cloud. The amphitheatre organ slowly wove a weird strain of melody. The chimes began to ring. No one spoke. There was nothing to say. They let the wondrous narrative of the financial shark melt like a sunset into memory.

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## A SKETCH OF THE 'OLD COACHING DAYS.'

JOHN POOLE.

I do not call him an early riser who, once in his life, may have been forced out of his bed at eight o'clock on a November morning, in consequence of his house having been on fire ever since seven; nor would I attach such a stigma to him who, in the sheer spirit of foolhardiness and bravado, should for once and a way 'awake, arise,' even three or four hours earlier, in the same inclement season. *I, myself, have done it!* But the fact is that the thing, as a constant practice, is impossible to one who is not 'to the manner born.' He must be taught, as a fish is taught to swim, from his earliest infancy.

I know it may be objected to me that chimney-sweepers, dustmen, &c., are early risers; but this I would rather take to be a vulgar error than admit it as a fact. What proof can you adduce that they have yet been to bed? For my own part, I am unwilling to think so uncharitably of human nature as to believe that any created being would force another to quit his bed at five o'clock on a frosty morning.

I have confessed that once, in the sheer spirit of bravado, I, myself, rose (or promised to rise) at that ignominious period of the night known, or rather heard of, by the term 'four in the morning.' My folly deserved a severe punishment, which, indeed, it received in its own consequences; but since I have lately been informed that 'a good-natured friend' is of opinion that it merits the additional chastisement of public exposure, I will (to spare him the pain of bestowing it upon me) inflict the lash with my own hand.

I had the pleasure of spending, years ago, my Christmas holidays very agreeably with a family at Bristol.

Having an appointment of some importance for the 8th of January in London, I had settled that my visit should terminate on Twelfth-night. On the morning of that festive occasion I had not yet resolved on any particular mode of conveyance to town, when, walking along Broad Street, my attention was brought to the subject by the various coach advertisements which were posted on the walls. The 'Highflyer' announced its departure at three in the afternoon—a rational hour; the 'Magnet' at ten in the morning—somewhat of the earliest; whilst the 'Wonder' was advertised to start every morning at five precisely!!!—a glaring impossibility.

We often experience an irresistible impulse to interfere in some matter simply because it happens to be no business of ours; and the case in question being clearly no affair of mine, I resolved to inquire into it. I went into the coach-office, expecting to be told, in answer to my very first question, that the advertisement was altogether a *ruse de guerre.*

'So, sir,' said I to the book-keeper, 'you start a coach to London at five in the morning?'

'Yes, sir,' replied he, with the most perfect nonchalance.

'You understand me? At *five*—in the MORNING?' said I, with an emphasis sufficiently expressive of doubt.

'Yes, sir, five to a minute—two minutes later you'll lose your place.'

This exceeded all my notions of human impudence. It was evident I had here an extraordinary mine to work, so I determined upon digging into it a few fathoms deeper.

'And would you, now, venture to *book* a place for me?'

'Let you know directly, sir—(Hand down the "Wonder" Lunnun-book there). When for, sir?'

I stood aghast at the fellow's coolness.

After a momentary pause, 'For to-morrow,' said I.

'Full outside, sir; just one place vacant *in*.'

The very word 'outside,' bringing forcibly to my mind the idea of a dozen shivering creatures being induced, by any possible means, to perch themselves on the top of a coach on a dark, dull, dingy, drizzling morning in January, confirmed me in my belief that the whole affair was what is vulgarly called a 'take-in.'

'So you *will* venture, then, to book a place for me?'

'Yes, sir, if you please.'

'And perhaps you will go so far as to receive half my fare?'

'If you please, sir—one pound two.'

'Well, you are an extraordinary person! Perhaps, now—pray be attentive—perhaps, now, you will carry on the thing so far as to receive the whole?'

'If you please, sir—two pound four.'

I paid him the money, observing at the same time, and in a tone calculated to impress his imagination with a vivid picture of attorneys, counsel, judge, and jury—'You shall hear from me again.'

'If you please, sir; to-morrow morning, at five *punctual*—start to a minute, sir—thank'ee, sir—good-morning, sir.'

And this he uttered without a blush!

'To what expedients,' thought I as I left the office, 'will men resort for the purpose of injuring their neighbours! Here is one who exposes himself to the consequences of an action at law, or, at least, to the expense of sending me to town in a chaise-and-four at a reasonable hour of the day; and all for so paltry an

advantage as that of preventing my paying a trifling sum to a rival proprietor—and on the preposterous pretence, too, of sending me off at five in the morning!'

The first person I met was my friend, Mark Nortington, and——

Even now, though years have since rolled over my head, I shudder at the recollection of the agonies I suffered when assured by him of the frightful fact that I had, really and truly, engaged to travel in a coach which, really and truly, would start at five in the morning!

It may be asked why I did not forfeit my forty-four shillings, and thus escape the calamity. No; the laugh would have been too much against me; so, resolving to put a bold face on the matter, I—I will not say I walked—I positively swaggered about the streets of Bristol for an hour or two with all the self-importance of one who has already performed some extraordinary exploit, and is conscious that the wondering gaze of the multitude is directed towards him. Being condemned to the miseries, it was but fair I should enjoy the honours of the undertaking. To every person I met with whom I had the slightest acquaintance I said aloud, 'I start at *five* to-morrow morning!' at the same time adjusting my cravat and pulling up my collar; and went into three or four shops and purchased trifles, for which I had no earthly occasion, for the pure gratification of my vainglory in saying, 'Be sure you send them to-night, for I start at *five* in the morning!'

But, beneath all this show of gallantry, my heart, like that of many another hero on equally desperate occasions—my heart was ill at ease.

I returned to Reeve's Hotel, College Green, where I was lodging.

The individual who, at this time, so ably filled the important office of 'Boots' at the hotel was a character. Be it remembered that, in his youth, he had been discharged from his place for omitting to call a gentleman who was to go by one of the morning coaches, and who, in consequence of such neglect, missed his journey. This misfortune made a lasting impression on the intelligent mind of Mr Boots.

'Boots,' said I in a mournful tone, 'you must call me at four o'clock.'

'Do 'ee want to get up, zur?' inquired he, with a broad Somersetshire twang.

'*Want* it, indeed! No; but I must.'

'Well, zur, I 'll carl 'ee; if you be as sure to get up as I be to carl 'ee, you 'll not knoa what two minutes arter vore means in your bed. Sure as ever clock strikes, I 'll have 'ee out, danged if I doan't! Good-night, zur;' and *exit* Boots.

'And now I 'll pack my portmanteau.'

It was a bitter cold night, and my bedroom fire had gone out. Except the rush-candle, in a pierced tin box, I had nothing to cheer the gloom of a very large apartment—the walls of which (now dotted over by the melancholy rays of the rushlight, as they struggled through the holes of the box) were of dark-brown wainscot—but one solitary wax taper. There lay coats, trousers, linen, books, papers, dressing materials, in dire confusion, about the room. In despair, I sat me down at the foot of the bed and contemplated the chaos around me. My energies were paralysed by the scene. Had it been to gain a kingdom, I could not have thrown a glove into the portmanteau; so, resolving to defer packing till the morrow, I got into bed.

My slumbers were fitful—disturbed. Horrible dreams assailed me. Series of watches, each pointing to the hour of FOUR, passed slowly before me; then timepieces, dials of larger size, and, at last, enormous steeple-clocks, all pointing to FOUR, FOUR, FOUR.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream,

and endless processions of watchmen moved along, each mournfully dinning in my ears, 'Past four o'clock.' At length I was attacked by nightmare. Methought I was an hour-glass. Old Father Time bestrode me; he pressed upon me with unendurable weight; fearfully and threateningly did he wave his scythe above my head; he grinned at me, struck three blows—audible blows —with the handle of his scythe on my breast, stooped his huge head, and shrieked in my ear:

'Vore o'clock, zur; I zay it be vore o'clock.'

It was the awful voice of Boots.

'Well, I hear you,' groaned I.

'But I doan't hear *you*. Vore o'clock, zur.'

'Very well, very well, that 'll do!'

'Beggin' your pardon, but it woan't do, zur. 'Ee must get up —past vore, zur.'

And here he thundered away at the door; nor did he cease knocking till I was fairly up, and had shown myself to him in order to satisfy him of the fact.

'That 'll do, zur; 'ee told I to carl 'ee, and I hope I ha' carld 'ee proper*ly*.'

I lit my taper at the rushlight. On opening a window-shutter I was regaled with the sight of a fog, a parallel to which London itself, on one of its most perfect November days, could scarcely have produced. A dirty, drizzling rain was falling. My heart sank within me. It was now twenty minutes past four. I was master of no more than forty disposable minutes, and in that brief space what had I not to do! The duties of the toilet were indispensable; the portmanteau *must* be packed; and, run as fast as I might, I could not get to the coach-office in less than ten minutes. Hot water was a luxury not to be procured; at that villainous hour not a human being in the house (nor, do I firmly believe, in the universe entire) had risen—my unfortunate self, and my companion in wretchedness, poor Boots, excepted. The water in the jug was frozen; but, by dint of hammering upon it with the handle of the poker, I succeeded in enticing out about as much as would have filled a tea-cup. Two towels, which had been left wet in the room, were standing on a chair, bolt upright, as stiff as the poker itself, which you might almost as easily have bent. The tooth-brushes were riveted to the glass in which I had left them, and of which (in my haste to disengage them from their stronghold) they carried away a fragment; the soap was cemented to the dish; my shaving-brush was a mass of ice. In shape more appalling, discomfort had never appeared on earth. I approached the looking-glass. Even had all the materials for the operation been tolerably thawed it was impossible to use a razor by such a light.

'Who 's there?'

'Now, if 'ee please, zur; no time to lose; only twenty-vive minutes to vive.'

I lost my self-possession—I have often wondered that *that* morning did not unsettle my mind.

There was no time for the performance of anything like a comfortable toilet. I resolved, therefore, to defer it altogether till the coach should stop for breakfast. 'I 'll pack my portmanteau; that *must* be done.' *In* went whatever happened to come first to hand. In my haste, I had thrust in, amongst my own things, one of mine host's frozen towels. Everything must come out again.

'Who 's there?'

'Now, zur; 'ee 'll be too late, zur.'

'Coming!'

Everything was now gathered together—the portmanteau would not lock. No matter; it must be content to travel to town in a *deshabille* of straps. Where were my boots? In my hurry I had packed away both pairs. It was impossible to travel to London on such a day in slippers. Again was everything to be undone.

'Now, zur, coach be going.'

The most unpleasant part of the ceremony of hanging (scarcely excepting the closing act) must be the hourly notice given to the culprit of the exact length of time he has still to live. Could any circumstance have added much to the miseries of my situation, most assuredly it would have been those unfeeling reminders.

'I 'm coming,' again replied I, with a groan. 'I have only to pull on my boots.'

They were both left-footed! Then must I open the rascally portmanteau again.

'Please, zur'——

'What in the name of the —— do you want now?'

'Coach be gone, please, zur.'

'Gone! Is there a chance of my overtaking it?'

'Bless 'ee! noa, zur; not as Jem Robbins do droive. He be vive mile off by now.'

'You are certain of that?'

'I warrant 'ee, zur.'

At this assurance I felt a throb of joy which was almost a compensation for all my sufferings past.

'Boots,' said I, 'you are a kind-hearted creature, and I will give you an additional half-crown. Let the house be kept perfectly quiet, and desire the chambermaid to call me'——

'At what o'clock, zur?'

'This day three months at the earliest!'

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## ALL ABOUT THE WEATHER.—ANON.

'Pretty warm,' the man with the thin clothes said to the man in the corner seat as the car was coming down the street.

'What's pretty warm?' growled the man in the corner.

'Why, the weather.'

'What weather?' more gruffly than ever.

'Why,' the man with the thin clothes said, looking as though he wished he hadn't begun it, 'this weather.'

'Well,' said the man in the corner, 'how's this weather different from any other?'

The man with the thin clothes looked nervously at the dun horse and said, 'It is warmer.'

'How do you know it is?' asked the man in the corner.

The other man began to wish he was well out of it, and said he supposed it was; he hadn't heard how the——

'Isn't the weather the same everywhere?' savagely demanded the man in the corner.

'Why, no,' the man with the thin clothes replied, wishing to goodness he had a newspaper to hide behind—'no; it's warmer some places, and some places it's colder.'

'What makes it warmer in some places than it's colder in others?' remorselessly pursued the man in the corner.

'Why,' the man with thin clothes said piteously, 'the sun; the effect of the sun's heat.'

'Makes it colder in some places than it's warmer in others?' roared the man in the corner indignantly. 'Never heard of such a thing.'

'No,' the man with thin clothes hastened to explain; 'I didn't mean that. The sun makes it warmer.'

'Then what makes it colder?' pursued the remorseless man in the corner.

The man in thin clothes wiped the beaded perspiration from his pallid brow, and said slowly he guessed it was the ice.

'What ice?' demanded the inquisitor.

'Why,' the victim said, with every symptom of approaching dissolution apparent in his tremulous voice, 'the ice that was—frozen—frozen—by the frost.'

'Did you ever see any ice that wasn't frozen?' howled the man in the corner, in a fine burst of derision.

The man in thin clothes huskily whispered that he wished he was dead, and said, 'No—that is, I believe I didn't.'

'Then,' thundered the man in the corner, 'what are you talking about?'

The man in thin clothes made an effort to brace up, and spicily replied that he was trying to talk about the weather.

'And what do you know about it?' triumphantly roared the man in the corner. 'What do you know about the weather?'

The man in thin clothes lost his grip again, and feebly said that he didn't know very much about it, that was a fact. And then he tried to be cheerful, and work in a little joke about nobody being able to know much about this weather, but the man in the corner sat down on him with a tremendous outburst.

'No, sir! I should say you didn't! You come into this car and force yourself on the attention of a stranger, and begin to talk to me about the weather, just as though you owned it, and I find you don't know a solitary thing about the matter you yourself selected for a topic of conversation; you don't know one thing about meteorological conditions, principles, or phenomena; you can't tell me why it is warm in August and cold in December; you don't know why icicles form faster in the sunlight than they do in the shade; you don't know why the earth grows colder as it comes nearer the sun; you can't tell why a man can be sunstruck in the shade; you can't tell me how a cyclone is formed nor how the trade-winds blow; you couldn't find the calm-centre

of a storm if your life depended on it; you don't know what a sirocco is, nor where the south-west monsoon blows; you don't know the average rainfall in the United Kingdom for the past and current year; you don't understand the formation of fog, and you can't explain why the dew falls at night and dries up in the day; you don't know why a wind dries the ground more quickly than a hot sun; you don't know one solitary thing about the weather, and you are just like a thousand and one other people, who always begin talking about the weather because they don't know anything else, when, by the caves of Boreas! sir, they know less about the weather than they do about anything else in the world!'

And the man in the corner glared up and down at the timid passenger, but no man durst answer him. And as for the man with thin clothes, he didn't know for the life of him whether he had a sunstroke or an ague-chill. He only knew that it seemed about twenty-seven miles to the next street crossing.

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## MRS B.'S ALARMS.—JAMES PAYN.

(*Abridged for Recitation.*)

Mrs B. is my wife; and her alarms are those produced by a delusion under which she labours, that there are assassins, gnomes, vampires, or what not in our house at night, and that it is my bounden duty to leave my bed at any hour or temperature, and to do battle with the same, in very inadequate apparel. The circumstances which attend Mrs B.'s alarms are generally of the following kind. I am awakened by the mention of my baptismal name in that peculiar species of whisper which has something uncanny in its very nature, besides the dismal associations which belong to it, from the fact of its being used only in melodramas and sick-rooms.

'*Henry, Henry, Henry!*'

How many times she had repeated this I know not; but at

last I wake, to view, by the dim firelight, this vision: Mrs B. is sitting up beside me, in a listening attitude of the very intensest kind; her nightcap (one with cherry-coloured ribbons, such as it can be no harm to speak about) is tucked back behind either ear; her hair—in paper—is rolled out of the way upon each side like a banner furled; her eyes are rather wide open, and her mouth very much so; her fingers would be held up to command attention, but that she is supporting herself in a somewhat absurd manner upon her hands.

'*Henry*, did you hear *that?*'

'What, my love?'

'That noise. There it is again; there—*there.*'

The disturbance referred to is that caused by a mouse nibbling at the wainscot; and I venture to say so much in a tone of the deepest conviction.

'No, no, Henry; it 's not the least like that: it 's a file working at the bars of the pantry-window. I will stake my existence, Henry, that it is a file.'

Whenever my wife makes use of this particular form of words I know that opposition is useless. I rise, therefore, and put on my slippers and dressing-gown. Mrs B. refuses to let me have the candle, because she will die of terror if she is left alone without a light. She puts the poker into my hand, and with a gentle violence is about to expel me from the chamber when a sudden thought strikes her.

'Stop a bit, Henry,' she exclaims, 'until I have looked into the cupboards and places;' which she proceeds to do most minutely, investigating even the short drawers of a foot and a half square. I am at length dismissed upon my perilous errand, and Mrs B. locks and double-locks the door behind me with a celerity that almost catches my retreating garment. My expedition therefore combines all the dangers of a sally, with the additional disadvantage of having my retreat into my own fortress cut off. Thus cumbrously but ineffectually caparisoned, I perambulate the lower stories of the house in darkness, in search of the disturber of Mrs B.'s repose, which, I am well convinced, is behind the wainscot of her own apartment, and nowhere else. The pantry, I need not say, is as silent as the grave, and about as cold. The great clock

in the kitchen looks spectral enough by the light of the expiring embers, but there is nothing there with life except black beetles, which crawl in countless numbers over my naked ankles. There is a noise in the cellar such as Mrs B. would at once identify with the suppressed converse of anticipated burglars, but which I recognise in a moment as the dripping of the small-beer cask, whose tap is troubled with a nervous disorganisation of that kind. The dining-room is chill and cheerless: a ghostly arm-chair is doing the grim honours of the table to three other vacant seats, and dispensing hospitality in the shape of a mouldy orange and some biscuits, which I remember to have left in some disgust, about—— Hark! the clicking of a revolver? No; the warning of the great clock—one, two, three. . . . What a frightful noise it makes in the startled ear of night! Twelve o'clock. I left this dining-room, then, but three hours and a half ago; it certainly does not look like the same room now. The drawing-room is also far from wearing its usual snug and comfortable appearance. Could we possibly have all been sitting in the relative positions to one another which these chairs assume? Or since we were there, has some spiritual company, with no eye for order left among them, taken advantage of the remains of our fire to hold a *reunion?* They are here even at this moment perhaps, and their gentlemen have not yet come up from the dining-room. I shudder from head to foot, partly at the bare idea of such a thing, partly from the naked fact of my exceedingly unclothed condition. They do say that in the very passage which I have now to cross in order to get to Mrs B. again, my great-grandfather 'walks'—in compensation, I suppose, for having been prevented by gout from taking that species of exercise while he was alive. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy, I think, as I approach this spot; but I do not say so, for I am well-nigh speechless with the cold—yes, the cold: it is only my teeth that chatter. What a scream that was! There it comes again, and there is no doubt this time as to who is the owner of that terrified voice. Mrs B.'s alarms have evidently taken some other direction. 'Henry, Henry!' she cries in tones of a very tolerable pitch. A lady being in the case, I fly upon the wings of domestic love along the precincts sacred to the perambulations of my great-

grandfather. I arrive at my wife's chamber; the screams continue, but the door is locked.

'Open, open!' shout I. 'What on earth is the matter?'

There is silence; then a man's voice—that is to say, my wife's voice in imitation of a man's—replies in tones of indignant ferocity, to convey the idea of a life-preserver being under the pillow of the speaker, and ready to his hand: 'Who are you—what do you want?'

'You very silly woman,' I answered; not from unpoliteness, but because I find that that sort of language recovers and assures her of my identity better than any other—'why, it 's I.'

The door is then opened about six or seven inches, and I am admitted with all the precaution which attends the entrance of an ally into a besieged garrison.

Mrs B., now leaning upon my shoulder, dissolves into copious tears, and points to the door communicating with my attiring-chamber.

'There 's sur—sur—somebody been snoring in your dressing-room,' she sobs, 'all the time you were away.'

This statement is a little too much for my sense of humour, and although sympathising very tenderly with poor Mrs B., I cannot help bursting into a little roar of laughter. Laughter and fear are deadly enemies, and I can see at once that Mrs B. is all the better for this explosion.

'Consider, my love,' I reason—'consider the extreme improbability of a burglar or other nefarious person making such a use of the few precious hours of darkness as to go to sleep in them! Why, too, should he take a bedstead without a mattress, which I believe is the case in this particular supposition of yours, when there were feather-beds unoccupied in other apartments? Moreover, would not this be a still greater height of recklessness in such an individual, should he have a habit of snor'——

A slight noise in the dressing-room, occasioned by the Venetian blind tapping against the window, here causes Mrs B. to bury her head with extreme swiftness, ostrich-like, beneath the pillow, so that the peroration of my argument is lost upon her. I enter the suspected chamber—this time with a lighted candle—and find my trousers, with the boots in them, hanging over the bedside some-

thing after the manner of a drunken marauder, but nothing more. Neither is there anybody reposing under the shadow of my boot-tree upon the floor. All is peace there, and at sixes and sevens as I left it upon retiring—as I had hoped, to rest.

Once more I stretch my chilled and tired limbs upon the couch; sweet sleep once more begins to woo my eyelids, when 'Henry, Henry!' again dissolves the dim and half-formed dream.

'Are you *certain*, Henry, that you looked in the shower-bath? I am almost sure that I heard somebody pulling the string.'

On one memorable night, and on one only, have I found it necessary to use that formidable weapon which habit has rendered as familiar to my hand as its flower to that of the Queen of Clubs.

The gray of morning had just begun to steal into our bed-chamber, when Mrs B. ejaculated with unusual vigour, 'Henry, Henry, they're in the front drawing-room; and they've just knocked down the parrot-screen.'

'My love,' I was about to observe, 'your imaginative powers have now arrived at the pitch of *clairvoyance*,' when a noise from the room beneath us, as if all the fireirons had gone off together with a bang, compelled me to acknowledge to myself at least that there was something in Mrs B.'s alarms at last. I trod downstairs as noiselessly as I could, and in almost utter darkness. The drawing-room door was ajar, and through the crevice I could distinguish, despite the gloom, as many as three muffled figures. They were all of them in black clothing, and each wore over his face a mask of crape, fitting quite closely to his features. I had never been confronted by anything so dreadful before. Mrs B. had cried 'Wolf!' so often that I had almost ceased to believe in wolves of this description at all. Unused to personal combat, and embarrassed by the novel circumstances under which I found myself, I was standing undecided on the landing, when I caught that well-known whisper of '*Henry, Henry!*' from the upper story. The burglars caught it also. They desisted from their occupation of examining the articles of *vertu* upon the chimney-piece, while their fiendish countenances relaxed into a hideous grin. One of them stole cautiously towards the door where I was standing. I heard his burglarious feet; I heard the '*Henry, Henry!*' still going on from above stairs; I heard my own heart pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat

within me. It was one of those moments in which one lives a life. The head of the craped marauder was projected cautiously round the door, as if to listen. I poised my weapon, and brought it down with unerring aim upon his skull. He fell like a bullock beneath the axe; and I sped up to my bedchamber with all the noiselessness and celerity of a bird. It was I who locked the door this time, and piled the wash-hand stand, two band-boxes, and a chair against it with the speed of lightning.

Was Mrs B. out of her mind with terror that at such an hour as that she should indulge in a paroxysm of mirth?

'Good heavens!' I cried, 'be calm, my love; there are burglars in the house at last.'

'My dear Henry,' she answered, laughing so that the tears quite stood in her eyes, 'I am very sorry. I tried to call you back. But when I sent you downstairs I quite forgot that this was the morning upon which I had ordered the sweeps!'

One of those gentlemen was at that moment lying underneath with his skull fractured, and it cost me fifteen pounds to get it mended, besides the expense of a new drawing-room carpet.

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## CANVASSING UNDER DISADVANTAGES.—M. QUAD.

He smiled blandly as he halted for a moment in front of the City Hall. He looked like a man who could palm off almost anything on the public at 100 per cent. profit, and yet leave each customer in a grateful mood. He had a tin trunk in his hand, and as he sailed down La Fayette Avenue the boys wondered whether the trunk contained tax receipts or horse liniment. The stranger halted in front of a residence, his smile deepened, and he mounted the steps and pulled the bell.

'Is the lady at home?' he inquired of the girl who answered the bell.

The girl thought he was the census-taker, and she seated him in the parlour and called the lady of the house. When the lady entered the stranger rose, bowed, and said:

'Madam, I have just arrived in this town after a tour extending

clear down to Florida, and wherever I went I was received with glad welcome.'

'Did you wish to see my husband?' she asked as he opened the tin trunk.

'No, madam; I deal directly with the lady of the house in all cases. A woman will appreciate the virtues of my exterminator and purchase a bottle where a man will order me off the steps without glancing at it.'

'Your—your what?' she asked.

'Madam,' he replied, as he placed a four-ounce phial of dark liquid on the palm of his left hand—'madam, I desire to call your attention to my Sunset Bedbug Exterminator. It has been tried at home and abroad, and in no case has it failed to'——

'What do you mean, sir?' she demanded, getting very red in the face. 'Leave this house instantly.'

'Madam, I do not wish you to infer from my'——

'I want you to leave this house!' she shrieked.

'Madam, allow me to explain my'——

'I will call the police!' she screamed, making for the door, and he hastily locked his trunk and hurried out.

Going down the street about two blocks, he saw the lady of the house at the parlour window, and instead of climbing the steps he stood under the window and politely said:

'Madam, I don't wish to even hint that any of the bedsteads in your house are inhabited by bedbugs, but'——

'What! What's that?' she exclaimed.

'I said that I hadn't the remotest idea that any of the bedsteads in your house were infested by bedbugs,' he replied.

'Take yourself out of this yard!' she shouted, snatching a tidy off the back of a chair and brandishing it at him.

'Beg pardon, madam, but I should like to call your'——

'Get out!' she screamed; 'get out, or I'll call the gardener!'

'I will get out, madam; but I wish you understood'——

'J-a-w-n! J-a-w-n!' she shouted out of a side window; but the exterminator agent was out of the yard before John could get around the house.

He seemed discouraged as he walked down the street, but he

had travelled less than a block when he saw a stout woman sitting on the front steps of a fine residence, fanning herself.

'Stout women are always good-natured,' he soliloquised as he opened the gate.

'Haven't got anything for the grasshopper sufferers!' she called out as he entered.

There was an angelic smile on his face as he approached the steps, set his trunk down, and said:

'My mission, madam, is even nobler than acting as agent for a distressed community. The grasshopper sufferers do not comprise a one-hundredth part of the world's population, while my mission is to relieve the whole world.'

'I don't want any peppermint essence,' she continued as he started to unlock the trunk.

'Great heavens, madam! do I resemble a peddler of cheap essences?' he exclaimed. 'I am not one. I am here in Detroit to enhance the comforts of the night—to produce pleasant dreams. Let me call your attention to my Sunset Bedbug Exterminator, a liquid warranted to'——

'Bed what?' she screamed, ceasing to fan her fat cheeks.

'My Sunset Bedbug Exterminator. It is to-day in use in the humble negro cabins on the banks of the Arkansaw as well as in the royal palace of her Majesty Q'——

'You r-r-rascal! you villyun!' she wheezed; 'how dare you insult me, m'——

'No insult, madam; it is a pure matter of'——

'Leave! Git o-w-t!' she screamed, clutching at his hair, and he had to go out in such a hurry that he couldn't lock the trunk until he reached the walk.

He travelled several blocks and turned several corners before he halted again, and his smile faded away to a melancholy grin. He saw two or three ragged children at a gate, noticed that the house was old, and he braced up and entered.

'I vhants no zoap,' said the woman of the house as she stood in the door.

'Soap, madam, soap? I have no soap. I noticed that you lived in an old house, and as old houses are pretty apt to be infested'——

'I vhants no bins or needles to-day!' she shouted.

'Madam, I am not a peddler of Yankee notions,' he replied. 'I am selling a liquid, prepared only by myself, which is warranted to'——

'I vhants no baper gollers!' she exclaimed, motioning for him to leave.

'Paper collars! I have often been mistaken for Shakespeare, madam, but never before for a paper-collar peddler. Let me unlock my trunk and show'——

'I vhants no matches—no dobacco—no zigars!' she interrupted; and her husband came round the corner and, after eyeing the agent for a moment, remarked:

'If you don't be quick out of here I shall not have any shoking about it!'

At dusk last night the agent was sitting on a salt-barrel in front of a commission house, and the shadows of evening were slowly deepening the melancholy look on his face.

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## JIMMY BUTLER AND THE OWL.—ANON.

'Twas in the summer of '46 that I landed at Hamilton, fresh as a new pratie just dug from the 'ould sod,' and wid a light heart and a heavy bundle I sot off for the township of Buford, tiding a taste of a song, as merry a young fellow as iver took the road. Well, I trudged on and on, past many a plisint place, pleasin' myself wid the thought that some day I might have a place of my own, wid a world of chickens and ducks and pigs and childer about the door; and along in the afternoon of the sicond day I got to Buford village. A cousin of me mother's, one Dennis O'Dowd, lived about sivin miles from there, and I wanted to make his place that night; so I inquired the way at the tavern, and was lucky to find a man who was goin' part of the way and would show me the way to find Dennis. Sure, he was very kind indade, and when I got out of his wagon he pointed me through the wood and tould me to go straight south a mile an' a half, and the first house would be Dennis's,

'An' you 've no time to lose now,' said he, 'for the sun is low, and mind you don't get lost in the woods.'

'Is it lost now,' said I, 'that I 'd be gittin', an' me uncle as great a navigator as iver steered a ship across the thrackless say! Not a bit of it, though I 'm obleeged to ye for your kind advice, and thank yiz for the ride.'

An' wid that he drove off an' left me alone. I shouldered me bundle bravely, an' whistlin' a bit of tune for company like, I pushed into the bush. Well, I went a long way over bogs, and turnin' round among the bush an' trees, till I began to think I must be well-nigh to Dennis's. But, bad cess to it! all of a sudden I came out of the woods at the very identical spot where I started in, which I knew by an ould crotched tree that seemed to be standin' on its head and kickin' up its heels to make divarsion of me. By this time it was growin' dark, and, as there was no time to lose, I started in a second time, determined to keep straight south this time, and no mistake. I got on bravely for a while; but, och hone! och hone! it got so dark I couldn't see the trees, and I bumped me nose and barked me shins, while the miskaties bit me hands and face to a blister; an' after tumblin' and stumblin' around till I was fairly bamfoozled, I sat down on a log, all of a trimble, to think that I was lost intoirely, an' that maybe a lion or some other wild craythur would devour me before morning.

Just then I heard somebody a long way off say, 'Whip poor Will!' 'Bedad,' sez I, 'I 'm glad it isn't Jimmy that 's got to take it, though it seems it 's more in sorrow than in anger they are doin' it, or why should they say "poor Will"? An' sure they can't be Injin, haythin, or naygur, for it 's plain English they 're afther spakin'. Maybe they might help me out o' this.' So I shouted at the top of me voice, 'A lost man!' Thin I listened. Prisently an answer came.

'Who? Whoo? Whooo?'

'Jimmy Butler the waiver!' sez I, as loud as I could roar; an', snatchin' up me bundle an' stick, I started in the direction of the voice. Whin I thought I had got near the place I stopped and shouted again, 'A lost man!'

'Who! Whoo! Whooo!' said a voice right over me head.

'Sure,' thinks I, 'it 's a mighty quare place for a man to be at this time of night; maybe it 's some settler scrapin' sugar off a sugar-bush for the children's breakfast in the mornin'. But where's Will and the rest of them?' All this wint through me head like a flash, an' thin I answered his inquiry.

'Jimmy Butler the waiver,' sez I; 'and if it wouldn't inconvanience yer honour, would yez be kind enough to step down and show me the way to the house of Dennis O'Dowd?'

'Who! Whoo! Whooo!' sez he.

'Dennis O'Dowd,' sez I, civil enough, 'and a dacent man he is, and first cousin to me own mother.'

'Who! Whoo! Whooo!'

'Me mother!' sez I; 'and as fine a woman as iver peeled a biled pratie wid her thumb-nail, and her maiden name was Molly M'Figgin. Me grandfather was'——

'Who! Whoo! Whooo!'

'Paddy M'Figgin! bad luck to yer deaf ould head; Paddy M'Figgin, I say—do you hear that? An' he was the tallest man in all the county Tipperary, excipt Jim Doyle the blacksmith.'

'Who! Whoo! Whooo!'

'Jim Doyle the blacksmith,' sez I, 'ye good-for-nothin' blaggurd naygur; and if yiz don't come down and show me the way this minit I 'll climb up there and break every bone in your skin, ye spalpeen, so sure as me name is Jimmy Butler!'

'Who! Whoo! Whooo!' sez he, as impident as iver.

I said niver a word, but lavin' down me bundle, and takin' me stick in me teeth, I began to climb the tree. Whin I got among the branches I looked quietly around till I saw a pair of big eyes just forninst me.

'Whisht,' sez I; 'and I 'll let him have a taste of an Irish stick,' an' wid that I let drive an' lost me balance an' came tumblin' to the ground, nearly breakin' me neck wid the fall. Whin I came to me sinsis I had a very sore head, wid a lump on it like a goose egg, and half of me Sunday coat-tail torn off intoirely. I spoke to the chap in the tree, but could get niver an answer at all, at all.

Sure, thinks I, he must have gone home to rowl up his head, for, by the powers! I didn't throw me stick for nothin'.

Well, by this time the moon was up and I could see a little; and I detarmined to make one more effort to reach Dennis's.

I wint on cautiously for a while, an' thin I heard a bell. 'Sure,' sez I, 'I 'm comin' to a settlement now, for I hear the church bell.' I kept on toward the sound till I came to an ould cow wid a bell on. She started to run, but I was too quick for her, and got her by the tail and hung on, thinkin' that maybe she would take me out of the woods. On we wint, like an ould country steeplechase, till, sure enough, we came out to a clearin' and a house in sight wid a light in it. So, leavin' the ould cow puffin' and blowin' in a shed, I went to the house, and, as luck would have it, whose should it be but Dennis's!

He gave me a raal Irish welcome, and introduced me to his two daughters—as purty a pair of girls as iver ye clapped an eye on. But whin I tould him me adventure in the woods, an' about the fellow who made fun of me, they all laughed and roared, and Dennis said it was an owl.

'An ould what?' sez I.

'Why, an owl—a bird,' sez he.

'Do you tell me, now?' sez I. 'Sure, it 's a quare country and a quare bird.'

And thin they all laughed again, till at last I laughed myself that hearty-like, and dropped right into a chair between the two purty girls, and the ould chap winked at me and roared again.

Dennis is me father-in-law now, and he often yet delights to tell our children about their daddy's adventure wid the owl.

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## CAUDLE'S WEDDING-DAY.—DOUGLAS JERROLD.

Caudle, love, do you know what next Sunday is? *No?* You don't? Well, was there ever such a strange man! Can't you guess, darling? Next Sunday, dear? Think, love, a minute—just think. What! and you don't know now? Ha! If I hadn't a better memory than you I don't know how we should ever get on. Well, then, pet—shall I tell you, dear, what next Sunday is?

Why, then, it 's our wedding-day. What are you groaning at,

Mr Caudle? I don't see anything to groan at. If anybody should groan, I 'm sure it isn't you. No; I rather think it 's I who ought to groan!

Oh dear! That 's fourteen years ago. You were a very different man then, Mr Caudle. What do you say? *And I was a very different woman?* Not at all—just the same. Oh, you needn't roll your head about on the pillow in that way; I say, just the same. Well, then, if I 'm altered, whose fault is it? Not mine, I 'm sure—certainly not. Don't tell me that I couldn't talk at all then—I could talk just as well then as I can now; only then I hadn't the same cause. It 's you have made me talk. What do you say? *You 're very sorry for it?* Caudle, you do nothing but insult me.

Ha! You were a good-tempered, nice creature fourteen years ago, and would have done anything for me. Yes, yes, if a woman would be always cared for she should never marry. There 's quite an end of the charm when she goes to church! We 're all angels while you 're courting us; but once married, how soon you pull our wings off! No, Mr Caudle, I 'm not talking nonsense; but the truth is, you like to hear nobody talk but yourself. Nobody ever tells me that I talk nonsense but you. Now, it 's no use your turning and turning about in that way; it 's not a bit of—— What do you say? *You 'll get up?* No, you won't, Caudle; you 'll not serve me that trick again, for I 've locked the door and hid the key. There 's no getting hold of you in day-time—but here, you can't leave me. You needn't groan, Mr Caudle.

Now, Caudle dear, do let us talk comfortably. After all, love, there 's a good many folks who, I dare say, don't get on half so well as we 've done. We 've both our little tempers, perhaps, but you are aggravating; you must own that, Caudle. Well, never mind; we won't talk of it; I won't scold you now. We 'll talk of next Sunday, love. We never have kept our wedding-day, and I think it would be a nice day to have our friends. What do you say? *They 'd think it hypocrisy?* No hypocrisy at all. I 'm sure I try to be comfortable; and if ever a man was happy, you ought to be. No, Caudle, no; it isn't nonsense to keep wedding-days; it isn't a deception on the world; and if it is, how many people do it? I 'm sure it 's only a proper compliment that a

man owes to his wife. Look at the Winkles—don't they give a dinner every year? Well, I know; and if they do fight a little in the course of the twelvemonth, that 's nothing to do with it. They keep their wedding-day, and their acquaintance have nothing to do with anything else.

As I say, Caudle, it 's only a proper compliment a man owes to his wife to keep his wedding-day. It is as much as to say to the whole world, 'There, if I had to marry again, my blessed wife 's the only woman I 'd choose!' Well, I see nothing to groan at, Mr Caudle—no, nor to sigh at either; but I know what you mean. I 'm sure, what would have become of you if you hadn't married as you have done? Why, you 'd have been a lost creature! I know it; I know your habits, Caudle; and—I don't like to say it—but you 'd have been little better than a ragamuffin. Nice scrapes you 'd have got into, I know, if you hadn't had me for a wife. The trouble I 've had to keep you respectable—and what 's my thanks? Ha! I only wish you 'd had some women.

But we won't quarrel, Caudle. No; you don't mean anything, I know. We 'll have this little dinner, eh? Just a few friends? Now don't say you don't care—that isn't the way to speak to a wife; and especially the wife I 've been to you, Caudle. Well, you agree to the dinner, eh? Now don't grunt, Mr Caudle, but speak out. You 'll keep your wedding-day? What? *If I'll let you go to sleep?* Ha! that 's unmanly, Caudle. Can't you say 'Yes,' without anything else? I say—can't you say 'Yes'? There, bless you! I knew you would.

And now, Caudle, what shall we have for dinner? No—we won't talk of it to-morrow; we 'll talk of it now, and then it will be off my mind. I should like something particular—something out of the way—just to show that we thought the day something. I should like—Mr Caudle, you 're not asleep? *What do I want?* Why, you know I want to settle about the dinner. *Have what I like?* No; as it is your fancy to keep the day, it 's only right that I should try to please you. We never had one, Caudle; so what do you think of a haunch of venison? What do you say? *Mutton will do?* Ha! that shows what you think of your wife. I dare say if it was with any of your club friends—any of your pot-house companions—you 'd have no objection to venison? I say if——

What do you mutter? *Let it be venison?* Very well. And now about the fish? What do you think of a nice turbot? No, Mr Caudle, *brill* won't do—it shall be turbot, or there shan't be any fish at all. Oh, what a mean man you are, Caudle! Shall it be turbot? *It shall?* And now about—the soup. Now, Caudle, don't swear at the soup in that manner; you know there must be soup. Well, once in a way, and just to show our friends how happy we 've been, we 'll have some real turtle. *No, you won't; you 'll have nothing but mock?* Then, Mr Caudle, you may sit at the table by yourself. Mock-turtle on a wedding-day! Was there ever such an insult? What do you say? *Let it be real, then, for once?* Ha, Caudle! as I say, you were a very different person fourteen years ago.

And, Caudle, you look after the venison. There 's a place I know, somewhere in the City, where you 'll get it beautiful! You 'll look at it? *You will?* Very well.

And now whom shall we invite? *Whom I like?* Now, you know, Caudle, that 's nonsense; because I only like whom you like. I suppose the Prettymans must come. But understand, Caudle, I don't have *Miss* Prettyman; I am not going to have my peace of mind destroyed under my own roof: if she comes, I don't appear at the table. What do you say? *Very well?* Very well be it, then.

And now, Caudle, you 'll not forget the venison? In the City, my dear! You 'll not forget the venison? A haunch, you know—a nice haunch. And you 'll not forget the venison? (*A loud snore.*) Bless me, if he ain't asleep! Oh, the unfeeling men!

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## MARK TWAIN EDITS AN AGRICULTURAL PAPER.

S. L. CLEMENS.

The sensation of being at work once again was luxurious, and I wrought all the week with unflagging pleasure. We went to press, and I waited a day with some solicitude to see whether my effort was going to attract any notice. As I left the office, toward sundown, a group of men and boys at the foot of the

stairs dispersed with one impulse, and gave me passage-way, and I heard one or two of them say, 'That's him!' I was naturally pleased by this incident. The next morning I found a similar group at the foot of the stairs, and scattered couples and individuals standing here and there in the street, and over the way, watching me with interest. The group separated and fell back as I approached, and I heard a man say, 'Look at his eye!' I pretended not to observe the notice I was attracting, but secretly I was pleased with it, and was purposing to write an account of it to my aunt. I went up the short flight of stairs, and heard cheery voices and a ringing laugh as I drew near the door, which I opened, and caught a glimpse of two young, rural-looking men, whose faces blanched and lengthened when they saw me, and then they both plunged through the window, with a great crash. I was surprised.

In about half-an-hour an old gentleman, with a flowing beard and a fine but rather austere face, entered, and sat down at my invitation. He seemed to have something on his mind. He took off his hat and set it on the floor, and got out of it a red silk handkerchief and a copy of our paper. He put the paper on his lap, and, while he polished his spectacles with his handkerchief, he said:

'Are you the new editor?'

I said I was.

'Have you ever edited an agricultural paper before?'

'No,' I said; 'this is my first attempt.'

Then this old person got up and tore his paper all into small shreds, and stamped on them, and broke several things with his cane, and said I did not know as much as a cow; and then went out, and banged the door after him; and, in short, acted in such a way that I fancied he was displeased about something. But, not knowing what the trouble was, I could not be any help to him.

But these thoughts were quickly banished when the regular editor walked in! [I thought to myself, 'Now, if you had gone to Egypt, as I recommended you to, I might have had a chance to get my hand in; but you wouldn't do it, and here you are. I sort of expected you.']

The editor was looking sad, and perplexed, and dejected. He surveyed the wreck which that old rioter and these two young farmers had made, and then said:

'This is a sad business—a very sad business. There is the mucilage bottle broken, and six panes of glass, and a spittoon, and two candlesticks. But that is not the worst. The reputation of the paper is injured, and permanently, I fear. True, there never was such a call for the paper before, and it never sold such a large edition or soared to such celebrity; but does one want to be famous for lunacy, and prosper upon the infirmities of his mind? My friend, as I am an honest man, the street out here is full of people, and others are roosting on the fences, waiting to get a glimpse of you, because they think you are crazy. And well they might, after reading your editorials. They are a disgrace to journalism. Why, what put it into your head that you could edit a paper of this nature? You do not seem to know the first rudiments of agriculture. You speak of a furrow and a harrow as being the same thing; you talk of the moulting season for cows; and you recommend the domestication of the pole-cat on account of its playfulness and its excellence as a ratter. Your remark that clams will lie quiet if music be played to them was superfluous—entirely superfluous. Nothing disturbs clams. Clams *always* lie quiet. Clams care nothing whatever about music. Ah, heavens and earth, friend! if you had made the acquiring of ignorance the study of your life, you could not have graduated with higher honour than you could to-day. I never saw anything like it. Your observation that the horse-chestnut, as an article of commerce, is steadily gaining in favour is simply calculated to destroy this journal. I want you to throw up your situation and go. I want no more holiday—I could not enjoy it if I had it. Certainly not with you in my chair. I would always stand in dread of what you might be going to recommend next. It makes me lose all patience every time I think of your discussing oyster-beds under the head of "Landscape Gardening." I want you to go. Nothing on earth could persuade me to take another holiday. Oh! why didn't you *tell* me that you didn't know anything about agriculture?'

'*Tell* you, you cornstalk, you cabbage, you son of a cauliflower!

It's the first time I ever heard such an unfeeling remark. I tell you I have been in the editorial business going on fourteen years, and it is the first time I ever heard of a man's having to know anything in order to edit a newspaper. You turnip!

'I take my leave, sir! Since I have been treated as you have treated me, I am perfectly willing to go. But I have done my duty. I have fulfilled my contract, as far as I was permitted to do it. I said I could make your paper of interest to all classes, and I have. I said I could run your circulation up to twenty thousand copies, and if I had had two more weeks I'd have done it. And I'd have given you the best class of readers that ever an agricultural paper had—not a farmer in it, nor a solitary individual who could tell a water-melon from a peach-vine to save his life. *You* are the loser by this rupture, not I, Pie-plant. Adios.' I then left.

(By kind permission of Messrs Chatto & Windus.)

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## A WOMAN'S DESCRIPTION OF A PLAY.—ZENAS DANE.

'Well, you know,' she says, after the matinee, as she was riding home on the horse-car with a woman who hadn't seen the play, but wanted to know all about it—'you see, there's a *lovely* young lady in the play; and oh! she *did* wear some of the loveliest dresses.'

'Oh, tell me about them!'

'Well, in the first act she wears a pale pink silk, combined with brocaded ruby plush, and'——

'Oh, that must have been *perfectly lovely!*'

'It *was*. Well, this young lady, you know, is betrothed to a handsome and rich young squire, you know, and she—oh! I must tell you about the dress she wore in the second act.'

'Yes, *do*.'

'Well, it was of azure satin and garnet velvet, with'——

'How lovely it must have been!'

'Yes, indeed; it had a watteau pleat in the back and an immense train of velvet, lined with pale blue satin, and'——

'Wasn't it beautiful?'

'Perfectly lovely! Well, you know, this rich young squire is

a terrible wreck of a fellow. Oh! he's just perfectly awful, and she don't know a thing about it and she loves him dreadfully; so, you know, she—oh! I wish you could have seen the dress she wore in the third act.'

'What was it like?'

'Well, it was of lemon-coloured *faille Française* worn under a rich black lace, with'——

'How striking that must have been!'

'It *was!* The train was very long and square, and the corsage was *so* low, and she had *lovely* arms and shoulders, and she wore such masses of corn-coloured ribbons and flowers, and—well, there is an old gipsy in the play who is perfectly splendid, you know; and in the fourth act this young lady is walking in the garden, and I *wish* you could have seen the dress she wore there!'

'*Tell* me about it!'

'Well, it was of white and crimson combined in the oddest and loveliest way, and she wore with it a short crimson plush cloak, lined with white, and thrown back over her shoulders so gracefully.'

'She must have looked lovely.'

'She *did.* Then, you know, there is an old countess in the play, who wears the most magnificent black velvet and lace dress I ever saw.'

'I think black velvet *so* elegant for old ladies.'

'So do I. In one act she wears a very striking dress of black and white, with her hair dressed in puffs and powdered, you know. She did look *so* sweet.'

'Yes, she must have.'

'Well, the play goes on, and it becomes real exciting in the second act, because, you know, this young squire has already been secretly married, and his wife comes in wearing the *loveliest* drake-neck green ottoman silk I *ever* saw. It had pink cut velvet panels at one side, and the train was laid in great pleats, with a fan-shaped breadth of the velvet set in in such an odd way.'

'I don't believe I'd like that.'

'Oh yes, you *would*, too; the effect was lovely. Well, this wife gets suspicious. Some one sends her a note or something,

you know. I was so taken up with her dress that I can't remember just how it was. Anyhow she raises an awful row, and it's just splendid. Then this beautiful young lady gets suspicious too, you know. This old gipsy puts a flea in her ear, and she hires a detective, you know, and the squire finds it out, and—that part of it is just splendid too.'

'I should think it might be.'

'It *was*. So it goes on, and there is a sort of a *fête*, you know, and you just *ought* to see the dresses the ladies wear there. This young lady's is the most exquisite combination of cardinal and gray, and she is one blaze of diamonds; and so, while they are at dinner, the squire is there too, you know, and the countess in a splendid silver brocade with real lace; and so, you know, this young lady's brother—oh, he *was* handsome!—he comes in, you know, and she has an old maid aunt who is awfully funny; and then the squire—oh yes; I forgot—there is a poor young artist in the play too, and he is in love with this young lady, you know, so—you see how it all is, don't you? Well, this gipsy woman and the wife of the young squire, you know, they come in, and there is an awful time. The young lady's brother fights the squire, and it's just splendid; and at last the young lady marries the artist, and her wedding dress is of—here's my corner. Good-bye. You really *must* see it—good-bye—it's lovely, and—good-bye.'

'Good-bye. Come and see'——

'Yes, I will. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye.'

'Good-bye.'

'Good'——

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## SAM'S LETTER.—Tom Taylor.

I wonder who w-wote me this letter. I thuppose the b-best way to f-find out ith to open it and thee. (*Opens letter.*) Thome lun-lunatic hath w-witten me this letter. He hath w-witten it upthide down. I wonder if he th-thought I wath going to w-wead it thanding on my head. Oh yeth, I thee; I had it t-t-turned

upthide down. 'Amewica.' Whom do I know in Amewica? I am glad he hath g-given me hith addwess anyhow. Oh yeth, I thee, it ith from Tham. I alwayths know Tham's handwiting when I thee hith name at the b-bottom of it. 'My dear bwother'—— Tham alwayths called me bwother. I-I thuppose ith's because hith m-mother and my mother wath the thame woman, and we never had any thisters. When we were boyths we were ladths together. They used to ge-get off a pwoverb when they thaw uth com-coming down the stweet. It ith vewy good, if I could only think of it. I can never wecollect anything that I can't we-we-member. Ith's—ith's the early bir-bird—ith's the early bir-bird that knowths ith's own father. What non-nonthense that ith! How co-could a bir-bird know iths own father? Ith's a withe—ith's a withe child—ith's a withe child that geths the wom. T-thath's not wite. What non-nonthense that iths! No pa-pawent would allow hiths child to ga-gather woms. Ith's a wyme. Ith's fish of-of a feather. Fish of a fea—— What non-nonthense! for fish don't have feathers. Ith's a bir-bird—ith's b-birds of a feather—b-birds of a feather flock together. B-birds of a feather! Just as if a who-who-whole flock of b-birds had only one f-feather. They'd all catch cold, and only one b-bird c-could have that f-feather, and he'd fly sidewithse. What con-confounded nonthense that iths! Flock to-to-gether! Of courthse th-they'd flock together. Who ever her-heard of a bird being such a f-fool as to g-go into a c-corner and flo-flock by himself? 'I wo-wote you a letter thome time ago'—— Thath's a lie; he d-didn't wi-wite me a letter. If he had witten me a letter he would have posted it, and I would have g-got it; so, of courthse, he didn't post it, and then he didn't wite it. Thath's easy. Oh yeths, I thee: 'but I dwopped it into the potht-potht-office forgetting to diwect it.' I wonder who the d-dic-dickens got that letter. I wonder if the poth-pothman iths goin' awound inquiring for a f-fellow without a name. I wonder if there iths any fel-fellow without any name. If there iths any fel-fellow without any name, how doeths he know who he iths himthelf? I-I wonder if thuch a fellow could get mawaid. How could he ask hiths wife to take hiths name if he h-had no name? Thath's one of thothse things no fellow can f-find out. 'I have just made a startling dithcovery.' Tham's

alwayths d-doing thomething. 'I have dithcovered that my mother iths—that m-my mother iths not my m-mother; that a —the old nurse iths my m-mother, and that you are not my b-bwother, and a—tha-that I was changed at my birth.' How c-can a fellow be changed at hith b-birth? If he iths not him-thelf, who iths he? If Tham 's m-mother iths not hith m-mother, and the nurthse iths hith mother, and Tham ithn't my bwother, who am I? That 's one of thothse things no fel-fellow can find out. 'I have p-purchased an ethstate som-somewhere'—— Doethn't the id-idiot know wh-where h-he has bought it? Oh yeths: 'on the bankths of the M-M-Mithithippi.' Wh-who iths M-Mithithippi? I g-gueth ith 's Tham's m-mother-in-l-law. Tham 's got mawaid. He th-thayths he felt v-vewy ner-nervous. He alwayths waths a lucky fellow getting th-things he didn't want and hadn't any use for. Thpeaking of mother-in-lawths, I had a fwiend who had a mother-in-law, and he didn't like her pwetty well; and she f-felt the thame way towardths him; and they went away on a st-steamer acwoths the ocean, and they got wecked, catht away on a waft, and they floated awound with their feet in the water and other amuthements, living on thuch things ath they could pick up—thardinths, ithe-cweam, owanges, and other c-canned goodths that were floating awound. When that waths all gone everybody ate everybody else. F-finally only himthelf and hiths m-mother-in-law waths left, and they pl-played a game of c-cards to thee who thould be eaten up—himthelf or hiths mother-in-law. A-a—the mother-in-law lotht. H-he treated her handthomely, only he strapped h-her flat on her back and c-carved her gently. H-h-he thays that waths the f-first time that he ever weally enjoyed a m-mother-in-law.

(From *Our American Cousin.*)

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## UNCLE MOSE COUNTING THE EGGS.—Anon.

Old Mose, who sells eggs and chickens for a living, is as honest an old negro as ever lived, but he has the habit of chatting familiarly with his customers; hence he frequently makes mistakes in counting out the eggs they buy. He carries his wares

around in a small cart drawn by a diminutive donkey. He stopped in front of the residence of an old lady, who came out to the gate to make the purchases.

'Have you got any eggs this morning, Uncle Mose?' she asked.

'Yes, indeed, I has. Jess got in ten dozen from de kentry.'

'Are they fresh?'

'I gua'ntees 'em. I knows dey am fresh.'

'I 'll take nine dozen. You can just count them into this basket.'

'All right, mum.' He counts: 'One, two, free, foah, five, six, seben, eight, nine, ten. You kin rely on dem bein' fresh. How's your son comin' on at de school? He mus' be mos' grown?'

'Yes, Uncle Mose; he is a clerk in a bank in Galveston.'

'Why, how ole am de boy?'

'He is eighteen.'

'You don't tole me so. Eighteen, an' gettin' a salary already! Eighteen' (counting), 'nineteen, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-free, twenty-foah, twenty-five—and how's yore gal comin' on? She was mos' growed up de las' time I see her.'

'She's married and living in Dallas.'

'Waal, I declar'! How de time scoots away! An' you say she has childruns? Why, how ole am de gal? She mus' be jess about'——

'Thirty-three.'

'Am dat so?' (counting) 'Firty-free, firty-foah, firty-five, firty-six, firty-seben, firty-eight, firty-nine, forty, forty-one, forty-two, forty-free. Hit am so sing'ler that you has sich ole childruns. I can't believe you has gran'childruns. You don't look more den forty yeahs ole yerself.'

'Nonsense, old man; I see you want to flatter me. When a person gets to be fifty-three years old'——

'Fifty-three? I jess don't gwinter b'leeve hit. Fifty-free, fifty-foah, fifty-five, fifty-six—I want you to pay tenshun when I counts de eggs, so dar 'll be no mistake—fifty-nine, sixty, sixty-one, sixty-two, sixty-free, sixty-foah—— Whew! Dis am a warm day! Dis am de time ob yeah when I feels I 'ze gettin' ole

myse'f. I ain't long fer dis world. You comes from an ole family. When yore fadder died he was sebenty yeahs ole.'

'Seventy-two.'

'Dat's old, suah. Sebenty-two, sebenty-free, sebenty-foah, sebenty-five, sebenty-six, sebenty-seben, sebenty-eight, sebenty-nine—and yore mudder? She was one ob de noblest-lookin' ladies I ebber see. You reminds me ob her so much. She libbed to mos' a hundred. I b'leeves she was done pass a centurion when she died.'

'No, Uncle Mose; she was only ninety-six when she died.'

'Den she warn't no chicken when she died. I know dat—ninety-six, ninety-seben, ninety-eight, ninety-nine, one hundred, one, two, free, foah, five, six, seben, eight. Dey is one hundred and eight nice fresh eggs—jess nine dozen; and here am one moah egg in case I has discounted myse'f.'

Ole Mose went on his way rejoicing. A few days afterward the lady said to her husband:

'I am afraid we will have to discharge Matilda. She steals. I am positive about the eggs, for I bought them the day before yesterday, and now about half of them are gone. I stood right there and heard ole Mose count them myself, and there were nine dozen.'

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## THE DISILLUSIONMENT OF FITZ-BOODLE.

W. M. THACKERAY.

Otho Sigismund Freiherr von Schlippenschlopp, Knight Grand Cross of the Ducal Order of the Two-necked Swan of Pumpernickel, of the Porc-et-Siflet of Kalbsbraten, Commander of the George and Blue Boar of Dummerland, Excellency, and High Chancellor of the United Duchies, lived on the second floor of a house in the Schnappsgasse, where, with his private income and his revenues as Chancellor, amounting together to some £300 per annum, he maintained such a state as very few other officers of the Grand Ducal Crown could exhibit. The Baron is married to Maria Antoinetta, a countess of the house of Kartoffelstadt,

branches of which have taken root all over Germany. He has no sons, and but one daughter, the Fräulein Ottilia.

Ottilia looked like a fairy; pale, small, slim, and airy. You could not see her face, as it were, for her eyes, which were so wild and so tender, and shone so that they would have dazzled an eagle, much more a poor goose of a Fitz-Boodle. In the theatre, when she sat on the opposite side of the house, those big eyes used to pursue me as I sat pretending to listen to the *Zauberflöte*, or to *Don Carlos*, or *Egmont*, and at the tender passages, especially, they would have such a winning, weeping, imploring look with them as flesh and blood could not bear.

Shall I tell how I became a poet for the dear girl's sake? Shall I tell what wild follies I committed in prose as well as in verse?—how I used to watch under her window of icy evenings, and with chilblainy fingers sing serenades to her on the guitar? Shall I tell how, in a sledging-party, I had the happiness to drive her, and of the delightful privilege which is, on these occasions, accorded to the driver?

Any reader who has spent a winter in Germany perhaps knows it. A large party of a score or more of sledgers is formed. Away they go to some pleasure-house that has been previously fixed upon, where a ball and collation are prepared, and where each man, as his partner descends, has the delicious privilege of saluting her. O heavens and earth! I may grow to be a thousand years old, but I can never forget the rapture of that salute.

'The keen air has given me an appetite,' said the dear angel as we entered the supper-room; and to say the truth, fairy as she was, she made a remarkably good meal—consuming a couple of basins of white soup, several kinds of German sausages, some Westphalia ham, some white puddings, an anchovy salad made with cornichons and onions, sweets innumerable, and a considerable quantity of old Steinwein and rum-punch afterwards. Then she got up and danced as brisk as a fairy; in which operation I of course did not follow her, but had the honour, at the close of the evening's amusement, once more to have her by my side in the sledge as we swept in the moonlight over the snow.

Kalbsbraten is a very hospitable place as far as tea-parties are

concerned, but I never was in one where dinners were so scarce. At the palace they occurred twice or thrice in a month; but on these occasions spinsters were not invited, and I seldom had the opportunity of seeing my Ottilia except at evening parties.

Nor are these, if the truth must be told, very much to my taste. Dancing I have forsworn, whist is too severe a study for me, and I do not like to play écarté with old ladies, who are sure to cheat you in the course of an evening's play.

But to have an occasional glance at Ottilia was enough; and many and many a napoleon did I lose to her mamma, Madame de Schlippenschlopp, for the blest privilege of looking at her daughter. Many is the tea-party I went to, shivering into cold clothes after dinner (which is my abomination), in order to have one little look at the lady of my soul.

At these parties there were generally refreshments of a nature more substantial than mere tea—punch, both milk and rum, hot wine, *consommé*, and a peculiar and exceedingly disagreeable sandwich made of a mixture of cold white puddings and garlic, of which I have forgotten the name and always detested the savour.

Gradually a conviction came upon me that Ottilia *ate a great deal.*

I do not dislike to see a woman eat comfortably. I even think that an agreeable woman ought to be *friande*, and should love certain little dishes and knick-knacks. I know that, though at dinner they commonly take nothing, they have had roast mutton with the children at two, and laugh at their pretensions to starvation.

No! a woman who eats a grain of rice, like Amina in the *Arabian Nights*, is absurd and unnatural; but there is a *modus in rebus:* there is no reason why she should be a gormandiseress—faugh!

It was, then, with a rage amounting almost to agony that I found Ottilia ate too much at every meal. She was always eating, and always eating too much. If I went there in the morning, there was the horrid familiar odour of those oniony sandwiches; if in the afternoon, dinner had been just removed, and I was choked by reeking reminiscences of roast meat. Tea we have spoken of. She gobbled up more cakes than any six people

present. Then came the supper and the sandwiches again, and the egg-flip and the horrible rum-punch.

She was as thin as ever—paler, if possible, than ever—but, by heavens! *her nose began to grow red!*

Ah! how I used to watch and watch it! Some days it was purple, some days had more of the vermilion—I could take an affidavit that after a heavy night's supper it was more swollen, more red than before.

I recollect one night when we were playing a round game (I had been looking at her nose very eagerly and sadly for some time), she of herself brought up the conversation about eating, and confessed that she had five meals a day.

'*That accounts for it!*' says I, flinging down the cards and springing up and rushing like a madman out of the room. I rushed away into the night and wrestled with my passion. 'What! Marry,' said I, 'a woman who eats meat twenty-one times in a week, besides breakfast and tea? Marry a sarcophagus, a cannibal, a butcher's shop? Away!' I strove and strove. I drank, I groaned, I wrestled and fought with my love—but it overcame me: one look of those eyes brought me to her feet again. I yielded myself up like a slave; I fawned and whined for her; I thought her nose was not so *very* red.

Things came to this pitch that I sounded his Highness's Minister to know whether he would give me service in the Duchy; I thought of purchasing an estate there. I was given to understand that I should get a chamberlain's key and some post of honour did I choose to remain, and I even wrote home to my brother Tom in England hinting a change in my condition.

At this juncture the town of Hamburg sent his Highness the Grand Duke (*àpropos* of a commercial union which was pending between the two states) a singular present—no less than a certain number of barrels of oysters, which are considered extreme luxuries in Germany, especially in the inland parts of the country, where they are almost unknown.

In honour of the oysters and the new commercial treaty (which arrived in *fourgons* despatched for the purpose), his Highness announced a grand supper and ball, and invited all the quality of all the principalities round about. It was a splendid affair; the

grand saloon brilliant with hundreds of uniforms and brilliant toilets—not the least beautiful among them, I need not say, was Ottilia.

At midnight the supper-rooms were thrown open, and we formed into little parties of six, each having a table, nobly served with plate, a lackey in attendance, and a gratifying ice-pail or two of champagne to *égayer* the supper. It was no small cost to serve five hundred people on silver, and the repast was certainly a princely and magnificent one.

I had, of course, arranged with Mademoiselle de Schlippenschlopp. Captains Frumpel and Fridelberger of the Duke's Guard, Mesdames de Butterbrod and Bopp, formed our little party.

The first course, of course, consisted of *the oysters*. Ottilia's eyes gleamed with double brilliancy as the lackey opened them. There were nine apiece for us—how well I recollect the number!

I never was much of an oyster-eater, nor can I relish them *in naturalibus* as some do, but require a quantity of sauces, lemons, cayenne peppers, bread-and-butter, and so forth, to render them palatable.

By the time I had made my preparations Ottilia, the captains, and the two ladies had well-nigh finished theirs. Indeed, Ottilia had gobbled up all hers, and there were only my nine left in the dish.

I took one—IT WAS BAD. The scent of it was enough—they were all bad. Ottilia had eaten nine bad oysters.

I put down the horrid shell. Her eyes glistened more and more; she could not take them off the tray.

'Dear Herr George,' she said, '*will you give me your oysters?*'

. . . . . .

She had them all down—before—I could say—Jack—Robinson.

. . . . . .

I left Kalbsbraten that night, and have never been there since.

## THE MAN WHO APOLOGISED.—ANON.

It was at the corner of Woodward Avenue and Congress Street, and the time was ten o'clock in the forenoon. A citizen who stands solid at two hundred pounds was walking along with bright eyes, and the birds singing in his heart, when all at once he found himself looking up to the cloudy heavens, and a voice up the street seemed to say:

'Did you see that old chap strike that icy spot and land on his head?'

The solid citizen rose up. The first thing he saw was a slim man with bone-coloured whiskers, who was leaning against a building and laughing as if his heart would break.

'I could spoil your fun in three minutes!' exclaimed the citizen, as he fished for the end of his broken suspender.

The slim man didn't deny it. He hadn't time. He had his hands full to attend to his laughing. The solid man finally found the suspender, counted up four missing buttons and his vest split up the back, and slowly went on, looking back and wondering if he could be held for damages to the sidewalk. He had been in his office about ten minutes, and had just finished telling a clerk that an express team knocked him down, when in came the slim man with bone-coloured whiskers. The solid man recognised him and put on a frown, but the other held out his hand and said:

'Mister, I came to beg your pardon. You fell on the walk, and I laughed at you, but—ha! ha! ha!—upon my word I couldn't help it. It was the—ha! ha! ha!—funniest sight I ever saw, and—oh! ho! ho! ho! ha! ha!—I couldn't help laughing!'

'I want none o' your penitence and none o' your company!' sharply replied the solid man, and the other went out.

In about an hour the 'fallen man' had to go over to the express office. The man with the bone-coloured whiskers was there with a package, and he reached out his hand and began:

'Sir, I ask your forgiveness. I know what belongs to dignity and good manners, but—but—ha! ha!—when I saw your heels

shoot out and your shoulders—ha! ha! ha!—double up, I had to—ho! ho! ha! ha! ha! ah-h-h-h!'

'I 'll thrash you if I ever get a good chance!' remarked the citizen, but yet the man sat down on a box and laughed till the tears came.

In the afternoon, as the citizen was about to take a car for home, some one touched him on the elbow. It was the man with the bone-coloured whiskers. His face had a very serious, earnest look, and he began:

'Citizen, I am positively ashamed of myself. I am going to settle in this town, and shall see you often. I want to ask your forgiveness for laughing at you this morning.'

He seemed so serious that the solid man began to relax his stern look, and he was about to extend his hand, when the other continued:

'You see, we are all—ha! ha! ha!—liable to accident. I, myself, have often—ha! ha! ha!—struck an icy spot and—ho! ho! ho! ha! ha!—gone down to grass—ah! ha! ho! ha! ho! ha!'

The solid citizen withdrew his hand, braced his feet, drew his breath, and tried to hit the slim man. His foot slipped, and the next thing he knew he was ploughing his nose into the hard snow. When he got up, the man with the bone-coloured whiskers was leaning against a lamp-post, and as black in the face as an old hat. The citizen made for a car, and his efforts to look innocent and unconcerned after he sat down broke his other suspender dead in two. Such is life. No man can tell what an icy spot will bring forth.

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## A MELTING STORY.—MARK TWAIN.

One winter evening a country storekeeper in the Green Mountain State was about closing up for the night, and while standing in the snow outside, putting up the window shutters, saw through the glass a lounging, worthless fellow within grab a pound of fresh butter from the shelf and conceal it in his hat.

The act was no sooner detected than the revenge was hit upon, and a very few minutes found the Green Mountain storekeeper at once indulging his appetite for fun to the fullest extent, and paying off the thief with a facetious sort of torture, for which he would have gained a premium from the old Inquisition.

'I say, Seth,' said the storekeeper, coming in and closing the door after him, slapping his hands over his shoulders, and stamping the snow off his feet.

Seth had his hand on the door, his hat on his head, and the roll of butter in his hat, anxious to make his exit as soon as possible.

'I say, Seth, sit down. I reckon, now, on such a cold night as this a little something warm would not hurt a fellow.'

Seth felt very uncertain. He had the butter, and was exceedingly anxious to be off; but the temptation of something warm sadly interfered with his resolution to go.

This hesitation was settled by the owner of the butter taking Seth by the shoulders and planting him in a seat close to the stove, where he was in such a manner cornered in by the boxes and barrels that, while the grocer stood before him, there was no possibility of getting out; and right in this very place, sure enough, the storekeeper sat down.

'Seth, we 'll have a little warm Santa Cruz,' said the Green Mountain grocer; so he opened the stove door, and stuffed in as many sticks as the place would admit; 'without it you 'd freeze going out such a night as this.'

Seth already felt the butter settling down closer to his hair; and he jumped up, declaring he must go.

'Not till you have something warm, Seth. Come, I 've got a story to tell you.'

And Seth was again rushed into his seat by his cunning tormentor.

'Oh, it 's so hot here,' said the thief, attempting to rise.

'Sit down—don't be in such a hurry.'

'But I 've got the cows to fodder and the wood to split—I must be going.'

'But you mustn't tear yourself away, Seth, in this manner. Sit down; let the cows take care of themselves, and keep yourself

easy. You appear to be a little fidgety,' said the roguish grocer, with a wicked leer.

The next thing was the production of two smoking glasses of hot toddy, the very sight of which, in Seth's present situation, would have made the hair stand erect upon his head had it not been well oiled and kept down by the butter.

'Seth, I will give you a toast now, and you can butter it yourself,' said the grocer, with an air of such consummate simplicity that poor Seth believed himself unsuspected.

'Seth, here's—here's a Christmas goose, well roasted—eh? I tell you it's the greatest in creation. And, Seth, don't you never use hog's fat or common cooking butter to baste it with. Come, take your butter—I mean, Seth, take your toddy.'

Poor Seth now began to smoke as well as melt, and his mouth was hermetically sealed up, as though he had been born dumb.

Streak after streak of butter came pouring from under his hat, and his handkerchief was already soaked with the greasy overflow.

Talking away as if nothing was the matter, the fun-loving grocer kept stuffing wood into the stove, while poor Seth sat upright, with his back against the counter and his knees touching the red-hot furnace before him.

'Cold night this,' said the grocer. 'Why, Seth, you seem to perspire as if you were warm. Why don't you take your hat off? Here, let me put your hat away.'

'No!' exclaimed poor Seth at last. 'No! I must go! Let me out! I ain't well! Let me go!'

A greasy cataract was now pouring down the poor man's face and neck, and soaking into his clothes, and trickling down his body into his boots, so that he was literally in a perfect bath of oil.

'Well, good-night, Seth,' said the humorous Vermonter—'if you will go!' and adding, as he started out of the door: 'I say, Seth, I reckon the fun I have had out of you is worth ninepence, so I shan't charge you for that pound of butter in your hat.'

(By kind permission of Messrs Chatto & Windus.)

## MY FOUNTAIN PEN.—Robert J. Burdette.

One day a bookseller, who had grown rich and thereby hardened his conscience, said to me, 'What you want is a good fountain pen.' I resisted for a while, but he finally persuaded me to try one at ten shillings. I faltered; I listened to the tempter; I yielded. When I went home that night I carried into its brightness a shadow that had never before marred its pure serenity.

I kept my guilty secret until after supper, and then by a cleverly contrived accident that would have fooled any man of my acquaintance, but which my wife and sister both saw at once had been carefully rehearsed, I spilled the only bottle of ink in the house. Wails of distress filled the air. 'Oh, never mind,' I said grandly; 'I don't need it.' Well, they said they didn't need it on the carpet either. I hadn't thought of that, and it retarded my plans a little, for it was half-an-hour before the excitement died down sufficiently to justify me in ringing up the curtain on the great fountain pen act. I sat down to the table, and said:

'I have a large number of letters to write to-night.'

Some one—I think it was my sister—said, without lifting her eyes from her book, that I would find the alphabet in the spelling-book, and thus get them all off at once.

I always scorn to answer irrelevant remarks, and went on to say that the loss of that ink would have proved a great calamity under the circumstances to a man less fertile in expedients than myself.

Then somebody said that a man less prolific in thumbs wouldn't have spilled the ink. I looked hurt at this, which made my audience laugh. I have often been pained at the cold heartlessness of women when a man is trying to pity himself. But, at any rate, I had secured their attention. So, with much ostentation, I adjusted the fountain pen, hung my tongue out to make gestures with, and began to write. I told the girls what it was, explained how it would run a week without filling, while I would gain twenty minutes every hour by not having to reach for the inkwell at every line. Then I made a faint scratch on the paper with the new pen. I kept on scratching, while the girls looked

on with now really awakened interest. By and by I wore a hole in the paper, and never a stain of ink anywhere visible.

'That's the nicest, cleanest pen,' my sister said, 'I ever saw. If you would only use a fountain pen all the time, I think we might venture to buy new carpets in the other rooms.'

It always makes my blood run cold to hear quiet sarcasm from a woman's lips. But I only said the room was so stuffy and warm the pen had got clogged. It was delicate as a thermometer, I said, and wasn't intended for use in a Turkish bath. I would remove the cap at the top, thus, and clear the ducts by blowing into it, thus.

Which I did, and blew two very slender but quite powerful jets of ink up into my face, on both sides of my nose. I never saw my family so completely overcome. At first I thought their shrieks were caused by fright, and that they were in agonies of distress on my account. But when I rubbed my smarting eyes clear of ink, and began to reassure them, I saw they were in paroxysms of mirth, when I was stricken with blindness that might eventually destroy my sight. I assumed that patient, grieved, innocent, suffering look which my friends have told me would make my fortune on the stage if I would stick to *East Lynne* and similar plays. Then I thought my family would die. They begged me with swaying figures and broken voices to get mad and break things if I wanted to, but not to look that way until I had washed my face. There are circumstances under which pathos, however effective at the right time, is extremely trying to sensitive natures.

After we got things subdued a little bit I read the instructions, and they told me to jar the pen slightly on the desk. I did so a few times, and again drew some nice, clean scratches on the paper. I fooled with the thing until about half-past nine o'clock, when suddenly, without any warning, it began to give down ink like a spout.

I said, 'There, that is what it wanted,' but had no time to explain what 'that' was. I was too busy trying to think of something to write in order to keep up with the deluge. For the very life of me I couldn't think of anything but Philadelphia, and I kept spelling that with three l's. Then I struck in on 'Dear sir,'

and wrote half-a-dozen lines of it as fast as I could. It was terrible. There we were racing along, that demon pen booming away like a geyser, my nervous hand scrawling line after line of 'Dear sirs' after it, and my excited tongue coming along a bad third, but still fighting for place.

Horror crowned the inhuman spectacle when the paper gave out, and the pen, spitefully sputtering a tablespoonful of ink on the table-cover, sullenly dried up and didn't shed another tear for nearly two weeks, although I did everything in the way of persuasion and compulsion except to blow in it. I have blown in a great many things since then, but never into a fountain pen.

The next evening the girls asked me if I was going to write some more with the new pen. I replied, with somewhat formal and dignified asperity, that I was. They said they were glad of it —that I was doing so much desk work that I needed exercise. They then left the room. Presently they returned with their gossamers on. They drew the hoods over their heads, raised their umbrellas, and opening their books, began to read. This was annoying, but I did not say anything. There are times when the wisest words of man's wisdom are folly. But nothing happened that night—that is, nothing that my friends would like to see in print. The pen was as clean as a candidate's record written by himself. Nothing was heard but its stainless scratching—that is, nothing to speak of. Well, I gave that pen to an enemy and swore off. For some months I never touched a fountain pen; but a new one came out, and I was induced to try it. It was as dry as good advice for nearly a week. Then it went off one day in the office when the city editor was fooling with it, not knowing it was loaded. I don't know what became of that pen. He threw it out of a six-story window, and I don't know where it went to. Since then I have suffered many things of many fountain pens. A fountain pen is a good thing, however, when you have a bottle of ink to dip it into about every second line, beginning with the first.

## DAVID COPPERFIELD AND HIS CHILD-WIFE.

CHARLES DICKENS.

All this time I had gone on loving Dora harder than ever. If I may so express it, I was steeped in Dora. I was not merely over head and ears in love with her; I was saturated through and through. I took night-walks to Norwood, where she lived, and perambulated round and round the house and garden for hours together, looking through crevices in the palings, using violent exertions to get my chin above the rusty nails on the top, blowing kisses at the lights in the windows, and romantically calling on the night to shield my Dora—I don't exactly know from what—I suppose from fire, perhaps from mice, to which she had a great objection.

Dora had a discreet friend, comparatively stricken in years, almost of the ripe age of twenty, I should say, whose name was Miss Mills. Dora called her Julia. She was the bosom friend of Dora. Happy Miss Mills!

One day Miss Mills said, 'Dora is coming to stay with me. She is coming the day after to-morrow. If you would like to call, I am sure papa would be happy to see you.'

I passed three days in a luxury of wretchedness. At last, arrayed for the purpose, at a vast expense, I went to Miss Mills', fraught with a declaration. Mr Mills was not at home. I didn't expect he would be. Nobody wanted *him*. Miss Mills was at home. Miss Mills would do.

I was shown into a room upstairs, where Miss Mills and Dora were. Dora's little dog Jip was there. Miss Mills was copying music, and Dora was painting flowers. What were my feelings when I recognised flowers I had given her!

Miss Mills was very glad to see me, and very sorry her papa was not at home, though I thought we all bore that with fortitude.

Miss Mills was conversational for a few minutes, and then, laying down her pen, got up and left the room.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

'I hope your poor horse was not tired when he got home at

night from that picnic,' said Dora, lifting up her beautiful eyes. 'It was a long way for him.'

I began to think I would do it to-day.

'It was a long way for *him*, for *he* had nothing to uphold him on the journey.'

'Wasn't he fed, poor thing?' asked Dora.

I began to think I would put it off till to-morrow.

'Ye—yes, he was well taken care of. I mean he had not the unutterable happiness that I had in being so near to you.'

I saw now that I was in for it, and it must be done on the spot.

'I don't know why you should care for being near me,' said Dora, 'or why you should call it a happiness. But, of course, you don't mean what you say. Jip, you naughty boy, come here!'

I don't know how I did it, but I did it in a moment.

I intercepted Jip. I had Dora in my arms. I was full of eloquence. I never stopped for a word. I told her how I loved her. I told her I should die without her. I told her that I idolised and worshipped her. Jip barked madly all the time. My eloquence increased, and I said, if she would like me to die for her, she had but to say the word, and I was ready. I had loved her to distraction every minute, day and night, since I first set eyes upon her. I loved her at that minute to distraction. I should always love her, every minute, to distraction. Lovers had loved before, and lovers would love again; but no lover had ever loved—might, could, would, or should ever love—as I loved Dora. The more I raved the more Jip barked. Each of us in his own way got more mad every moment.

Well, well! Dora and I were sitting on the sofa, by and by, quiet enough, and Jip was lying in her lap winking peacefully at me. It was off my mind. I was in a state of perfect rapture. Dora and I were engaged.

Being poor, I felt it necessary the next time I went to my darling to expatiate on that unfortunate drawback. I soon carried desolation into the bosom of our joys—not that I meant to do it, but that I was so full of the subject—by asking Dora, without the smallest preparation, if she could love a beggar.

'How can you ask me anything so foolish? Love a beggar!'

'Dora, my own dearest, I am a beggar!'

'How can you be such a silly thing,' replied Dora, slapping my hand, 'as to sit there telling such stories? I 'll make Jip bite you if you are so ridiculous.'

But I looked so serious that Dora began to cry. She did nothing but exclaim, oh dear! oh dear! and oh, she was so frightened! And where was Julia Mills? And oh! take her to Julia Mills; and go away, please! until I was almost beside myself.

I thought I had killed her. I sprinkled water on her face; I went down on my knees; I plucked at my hair; I implored her forgiveness; I besought her to look up; I ravaged Miss Mills' workbox for a smelling-bottle, and, in my agony of mind, applied an ivory needle-case instead, and dropped all the needles over Dora.

At last I got Dora to look at me, with a horrified expression, which I gradually soothed until it was only loving, and her soft, pretty cheek was lying against mine.

'Is your heart mine still, dear Dora?'

'Oh yes! oh yes! it 's all yours. Oh, don't be dreadful!'

'My dearest love, the crust well earned'——

'Oh yes; but I don't want to hear any more about crusts. And after we are married Jip must have a mutton-chop every day at twelve, or he 'll die.'

I was charmed with her childish, winning way, and I fondly explained to her that Jip should have his mutton-chop with his accustomed regularity.

When we had been engaged some half-year or so, Dora delighted me by asking me to give her that cookery-book I had once spoken of, and to show her how to keep accounts, as I had once promised I would. I brought the volume with me on my next visit (I got it prettily bound first, to make it look less dry and more inviting), and showed her an old housekeeping book of my aunt's, and gave her a set of tablets, and a pretty little pencil-case, and a box of leads, to practise housekeeping with.

But the cookery-book made Dora's head ache, and the figures made her cry. They wouldn't add up, she said. So she rubbed

them out, and drew little nosegays, and likenesses of me and Jip, all over the tablets.

Time went on, and at last, here in this hand of mine, I held the wedding license. There were the two names in the sweet old visionary connection—David Copperfield and Dora Spenlow; and there in the corner was that parental institution, the Stamp Office, looking down upon our union; and there, in the printed form of words, was the Archbishop of Canterbury invoking a blessing on us, and doing it as cheap as could possibly be expected.

I doubt whether two young birds could have known less about keeping house than I and my pretty Dora did. We had a servant, of course. *She* kept house for us.

We had an awful time of it with Mary Anne.

Her name was Paragon. Her nature was represented to us, when we engaged her, as being feebly expressed in her name. She had a written character, as large as a proclamation, and according to this document could do everything of a domestic nature that ever I heard of, and a great many things that I never did hear of. She was a woman in the prime of life, of a severe countenance, and subject (particularly in the arms) to a sort of perpetual measles. She had a cousin in the Life Guards, with such long legs that he looked like the afternoon shadow of somebody else. She was warranted sober and honest; and I am therefore willing to believe that she was in a fit when we found her under the boiler, and that the deficient teaspoons were attributable to the dustman. She was the cause of our first little quarrel.

'My dearest life,' I said one day to Dora, 'do you think that Mary Anne has any idea of time?'

'Why, Doady?'

'My love, because it 's five, and we were to have dined at four.'

My little wife came and sat upon my knee, to coax me to be quiet, and drew a line with her pencil down the middle of my nose; but I couldn't dine off that, though it was very agreeable.

'Don't you think, my dear, it would be better for you to remonstrate with Mary Anne?'

'Oh, no please! I couldn't, Doady!'

'Why not, my love?'

'Oh, because I am such a little goose, and she knows I am!'

I thought this sentiment so incompatible with the establishment of any system of check on Mary Anne that I frowned a little.

'My precious wife, we must be serious sometimes. Come! sit down on this chair, close beside me! Give me the pencil! There! Now let us talk sensibly. You know, dear'—what a little hand it was to hold, and what a tiny wedding-ring it was to see!—'you know, my love, it is not exactly comfortable to have to go out without one's dinner. Now, is it?'

'N-n-no!' replied Dora faintly.

'My love, how you tremble!'

'Because I know you 're going to scold me.'

'My sweet, I am only going to reason.'

'Oh, but reasoning is worse than scolding! I didn't marry to be reasoned with. If you meant to reason with such a poor little thing as I am, you ought to have told me so, you cruel boy!'

'Dora, my darling!'

'No, I am not your darling, because you *must* be sorry that you married me, or else you wouldn't reason with me!'

I felt so injured by the inconsequential nature of this charge that it gave me courage to be grave.

'Now, my own Dora, you are childish, and are talking nonsense. You must remember, I am sure, that I was obliged to go out yesterday when dinner was half-over; and that, the day before, I was made quite unwell by being obliged to eat underdone veal in a hurry. To-day I don't dine at all; and I am afraid to say how long we waited for breakfast, and *then* the water didn't boil. I don't mean to reproach you, my dear, but this is not comfortable.'

'Oh, you cruel, cruel boy, to say I am a disagreeable wife!'

'Now, my dear Dora, you must know that I never said that!'

'You said I wasn't comfortable!'

'I said the housekeeping was not comfortable!'

'It 's exactly the same thing! And I wonder, I do, at your making such ungrateful speeches, when you know that the other day, when you said you would like a little bit of fish, I went out myself, miles and miles, and ordered it, to surprise you.'

'And it was very kind of you, my own darling; and I felt it so much that I wouldn't on any account have mentioned that you

bought a salmon, which was too much for two; or that it cost one pound six, which was more than we can afford.'

'You enjoyed it very much,' sobbed Dora. 'And you said I was a mouse.'

'And I 'll say so again, my love, a thousand times!'

I said it a thousand times and more, and went on saying it until Mary Anne's cousin deserted into our coal-hole, and was brought out, to our great amazement, by a picket of his companions-in-arms, who took him away handcuffed in a procession that covered our front garden with disgrace.

Everybody we had anything to do with seemed to cheat us. Our appearance in a shop was a signal for the damaged goods to be brought out immediately. If we bought a lobster, it was full of water. All our meat turned out tough, and there was hardly any crust to our loaves.

As to the washerwoman pawning the clothes, and coming in a state of penitent intoxication to apologise, I suppose that might have happened several times to anybody. Also the chimney on fire, the parish engine, and perjury on the part of the beadle. But I apprehend we were personally unfortunate in our page, whose principal function was to quarrel with the cook. We wanted to get rid of him, but he was very much attached to us, and wouldn't go, until one day he stole Dora's watch; then he went.

'I am very sorry for all this, Doady,' said Dora. 'Will you call me a name I want you to call me?'

'What is it, my dear?'

'It 's a stupid name—Child-wife. When you are going to be angry with me say to yourself, "It 's only my Child-wife." When I am very disappointing say, 'I knew a long time ago that she would make but a Child-wife. When you miss what you would like me to be, and what I should like to be, and what I think I never can be, say, "Still, my foolish Child-wife loves me." For indeed I do.'

I invoke the innocent figure that I dearly loved to come out of the mists and shadows of the past, and to turn its gentle head towards me once again, and to bear witness that it was made happy by what I answered.

## BUCK FANSHAW'S FUNERAL.—Mark Twain.

There was a grand time over Buck Fanshaw when he died. He was a representative citizen. He had 'killed his man'—not in his own quarrel, to be sure, but in defence of a stranger beset by numbers. He had kept a sumptuous saloon. He had held a high position in the fire department, and had been a very Warwick in politics. When he died there was great lamentation throughout the town, but especially in the vast bottom-stratum of society.

On the inquest it was shown that Buck Fanshaw, in the delirium of a wasting typhoid fever, had taken arsenic, shot himself through the body, cut his throat, and jumped out of a four-story window and broken his neck; and, after due deliberation, the jury, sad and tearful, but with intelligence unblinded by its sorrow, brought in a verdict of 'death by the visitation of Providence.' What could the world do without juries?

Prodigious preparations were made for the funeral. All the vehicles in town were hired, all the saloons were put in mourning, all the municipal and fire-company flags were hung at half-mast, and all the firemen ordered to muster in uniform and bring their machines duly draped in black.

Regretful resolutions were passed and various committees appointed; among others, a committee of one was deputed to call on the minister—a fragile, gentle, spiritual new fledgling from an eastern theological seminary, and as yet unacquainted with the ways of the mines. The committee-man, 'Scotty' Briggs, made his visit.

Being admitted to his presence, he sat down before the clergyman, placed his fire-hat on an unfinished manuscript sermon under the minister's nose, took from it a red silk handkerchief, wiped his brow, and heaved a sigh of dismal impressiveness, explanatory of his business. He choked, and even shed tears, but with an effort he mastered his voice, and said in lugubrious tones:

'Are you the duck that runs the gospel-mill next door?'

'Am I the—— Pardon me, I believe I do not understand.'

With another sigh and a half-sob, Scotty rejoined:

'Why, you see, we are in a bit of trouble, and the boys thought maybe you'd give us a lift, if we'd tackle you—that is, if I've got the rights of it, and you're the head clerk of the doxology works next door.'

'I am the shepherd in charge of the flock whose fold is next door.'

'The which?'

'The spiritual adviser of the little company of believers whose sanctuary adjoins these premises.'

Scotty scratched his head, reflected a moment, and then said:

'You ruther hold over me, pard. I reckon I can't call that card. Ante and pass the buck.'

'How? I beg your pardon. What did I understand you to say?'

'Well, you've ruther got the bulge on me. Or maybe we've both got the bulge, somehow. You don't smoke me and I don't smoke you. You see, one of the boys has passed in his checks, and we want to give him a good send off; and so the thing I'm on now is to roust out somebody to jerk a little chin-music for us and waltz him through handsome.'

'My friend, I seem to grow more and more bewildered. Your observations are wholly incomprehensible to me. Can you not simplify them some way? At first I thought perhaps I understood you, but I grope now. Would it not expedite matters if you restricted yourself to categorical statements of fact unencumbered with obstructing accumulations of metaphor and allegory?'

Another pause and more reflection. Then Scotty said:

'I'll have to pass, judge.'

'How?'

'You've raised me out, pard.'

'I still fail to catch your meaning.'

'Why, that last lead of yourn is too many for me—that's the idea. I can't neither trump nor follow suit.'

The clergyman sank back in his chair perplexed. Scotty leaned his head on his hand and gave himself up to reflection. Presently his face came up, sorrowful but confident.

'I 've got it now, so 's you can savvy,' said he. 'What we want is a gospel-sharp. See?'

'A what?'

'Gospel-sharp—parson.'

'Oh! Why did you not say so before? I am a clergyman—a parson.'

'Now you talk! You see my blind, and straddle it like a man. Put it there!'—extending a brawny paw, which closed over the minister's small hand and gave it a shake indicative of fraternal sympathy and fervent gratification.

'Now we 're all right, pard. Let 's start fresh. Don't you mind me snuffling a little, becuz we 're in a power of trouble. You see, one of the boys has gone up the flume'——

'Gone where?'

'Up the flume—throwed up the sponge, you know.'

'Thrown up the sponge?'

'Yes—kicked the bucket'——

'Ah!—has departed to that mysterious country from whose bourn no traveller returns.'

'Return? Well, I reckon not. Why, pard, he 's *dead!*'

'Yes; I understand.'

'Oh, you do? Well, I thought maybe you might be getting tangled some more. Yes, you see, he 's dead again'——

'*Again!* Why, has he ever been dead before?'

'Dead before? No. Do you reckon a man has got as many lives as a cat? But you bet he 's awful dead now, poor old boy! and I wish I 'd never seen this day. I don't want no better friend than Buck Fanshaw. I know'd him by the back; and when I know a man like him I freeze to him—you hear *me.* Take him all round, pard, there never was a bullier man in the mines. No man ever knowed Buck Fanshaw to go back on a friend. But it 's all up, you know; it 's all up. It ain't no use. They 've scooped him!'

'Scooped him?'

'Yes—death has. Well, well, well, we 've got to give him up. Yes, indeed. It 's a kind of a hard world after all, ain't it? But, pard, he was a rustler. You ought to seen him get started once. He was a bully boy with a glass eye! Just spit in his face and

give him room according to his strength, and it was just beautiful to see him peel and go in. He was the worst son of a thief that ever drawed breath. Pard, he was on it. He was on it bigger than an Injun.'

'On it? On what?'

'On the shoot. On the shoulder. On the fight. Understand? *He* didn't give a continental—for *any*body. *Beg* your pardon, friend, for coming so near saying a cuss word—but, you see, I 'm on an awful strain in this palaver, on account of having to cramp down and draw everything so mild. But we 've got to give him up. There ain't any getting around that, I don't reckon. Now, if we can get you to help plant him'——

'Preach the funeral discourse? Assist at the obsequies?'

'Obs'quies is good. Yes. That 's it; that 's our little game. We are going to get up the thing regardless, you know. He was always nifty himself, and so you bet you his funeral ain't going to be no slouch; solid silver door-plate on his coffin, six plumes on the hearse, and a nigger on the box, with a biled shirt and a plug hat on—how 's that for high? And we 'll take care of *you*, pard. We 'll fix you all right. There will be a kerridge for you; and whatever you want you just 'scape out, and we 'll 'tend to it. We 've got a shebang fixed up for you to stand behind in No. 1's house, and don't you be afraid. Just go in and toot your horn, if you don't sell a clam. Put Buck through as bully as you can, pard; for anybody that knowed him will tell you that he was one of the whitest men that was ever in the mines. You can't draw it too strong. He never could stand it to see things goin' wrong. He 's done more to make this town peaceable than any man in it. I 've seen him lick four greasers in eleven minutes, myself. If a thing wanted regulating, *he* warn't a man to go browsing around after somebody to do it; but he would prance in and regulate it himself. He warn't a Catholic; but it didn't make no difference about that when it came down to what a man's rights was; and so, when some roughs jumped the Catholic boneyard and started to stake out town lots in it, he went for 'em, and he cleaned 'em, too! I was there, pard, and I seen it myself.'

'That was very well indeed—at least the impulse was, whether

the act was entirely defensible or not. Had deceased any religious convictions? That is to say, did he feel a dependence upon or acknowledge allegiance to a Higher Power?'

More reflection.

'I reckon you 've stumped me again, pard. Could you say it over once more, and say it slow?'

'Well, to simplify it somewhat, was he, or, rather, had he ever been connected with any organisation sequestered from secular concerns and devoted to self-sacrifice in the interests of morality?'

'All down but nine—set 'em up on the other alley, pard.'

'What did I understand you to say?'

'Why, you 're most too many for me, you know. When you get in with your left I hunt grass every time. Every time you draw, you fill; but I don't seem to have any luck. Let 's have a new deal.'

'How? Begin again?'

'That 's it.'

'Very well. Was he a good man, and'——

'There—I see that; don't put up another chip till I look at my hand. A good man, says you? Pard, it ain't no name for it. He was the best man that ever—pard, you would have doted on that man. He could lam any galoot of his inches in America. It was him that put down the riot last election before it got a start; and everybody said that he was the only man that could have done it. He waltzed in with a trumpet in one hand and a spanner in the other, and sent fourteen men home on a shutter in less than three minutes. He had that riot all broke up and prevented nice before anybody had a chance to strike a blow. He was always for peace, and he would *have* peace—he could not stand disturbances. Pard, he was a great loss to this town. It would please the boys if you could chip in something like that and do him justice. He was the bulliest man in the mountains, pard; he could run faster, jump higher, hit harder, and hold more tanglefoot whisky without spilling it than any man in seventeen counties. Put that in, pard; it 'll please the boys more than anything you could say. And you can say, pard, that he never shook his mother.'

'Never shook his mother?'

'That 's it—any of the boys will tell you so.'

'Well, but why *should* he shake her?'

'That 's what I say—but some people does.'

'Not people of any repute?'

'Well, some that averages pretty so-so.'

'In my opinion, a man that would offer personal violence to his mother ought to'——

'Cheese it, pard; you 've banked your ball clean outside the string. What I was a-drivin' at was that he never *throwed off* on his mother—don't you see? No indeedy. He give her a house to live in, and town lots, and plenty of money; and he looked after her and took care of her all the time; and when she was down with the smallpox, I 'm cussed if he didn't set up nights and nuss her himself! *Beg* your pardon for saying it, but it hopped out too quick for yours truly. You 've treated me like a gentleman, and I ain't the man to hurt your feelings intentional. I think you 're white. I think you 're a square man, pard. I like you, and I 'll lick any man that don't. I 'll lick him till he can't tell himself from a last year's corpse! Put it there!'

Another fraternal handshake—and exit.

The obsequies were all that 'the boys' could desire. Such funeral pomp had never been seen in Virginia. The plumed hearse, the dirge-breathing brass bands, the closed marts of business, the flags drooping at half-mast, the long plodding procession of uniformed secret societies, military battalions, and fire companies, draped engines, carriages of officials, and citizens in vehicles and on foot, attracted multitudes of spectators to the sidewalks, roofs, and windows; and for years afterward the degree of grandeur attained by any civic display was determined by comparison with Buck Fanshaw's funeral.

(From *The Innocents at Home*, by kind permission of Messrs Chatto & Windus.)

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## THE SWALLOWED FROG.—MAX ADELER.

Barnes the pedagogue is a worthy man who has seen trouble. Precisely what was the nature of the afflictions which had filled

his face with furrows and given him the air of one who has been overburdened with sorrows was not revealed until Mr Keyser told the story one evening at the grocery store. Whether his narrative is strictly true or not is uncertain. There is a bare possibility that Mr Keyser may have exaggerated grossly a very simple fact.

'Nobody ever knew how it got in there,' said Mr Keyser, clasping his hands over his knee, and spitting into the stove. 'Some thought Barnes must 've swallowed a tadpole while drinking out of a spring and it subsequently grew inside him, while others allowed that maybe he 'd accidentally eaten frogs' eggs some time and they 'd hatched out. But, anyway, he had that frog down there inside of him settled and permanent, and perfectly satisfied with being in out of the rain. It used to worry Barnes more 'n a little, and he tried various things to git rid of it. The doctors they give him sickening stuff, and over and over ag'in emptied him; and then they 'd hold him by the heels and shake him over a basin, and they 'd bait a hook with a fly and fish down his throat hour after hour, but that frog was too intelligent. He never even gave them a nibble; and when they 'd try to fetch him with an emetic, he 'd dig his claws into Barnes's membranes and hold on until the storm was over.

'Not that Barnes minded the frog merely being in there if he 'd only a kept quiet. But he was too vociferous—that 's what Barnes said to me. A taciturn frog he wouldn't have cared about so much. But how would you like to have one down inside of you there a-whooping every now and then in the most ridiculous manner? Maybe, for instance, Barnes 'd be out taking tea with a friend, and just when everybody else was quiet it 'd suddenly occur to his frog to tune up, and the next minute you 'd hear something go "Blo-o-o-ood-a-noun! Blo-oo-oo-ood-a-noun!" two or three times, apparently under the table. Then the folks would ask if there was an aquarium in the house, or if the man had a frog-pond in the cellar, and Barnes 'd get as red as fire and jump up and go home.

'And often when he 'd be setting in church, perhaps in the most solemn part of the sermon, he 'd feel something give two or three quick kinder jerks under his vest, and presently that reptile would bawl right out in the meeting, "Bloo-oo-oo-ood-a-noun!

Bloo-oo-oo-ood-a-nou-ou-oun!" and keep it up until the sexton would come along and run out two or three boys for profaning the sanctuary. And at last he'd fix it on poor old Barnes, and then tell him if he wanted to practise ventriloquism he'd better wait till after church. And then the frog'd give six or seven more hollers, so that the minister would stop and look at Barnes, and Barnes'd get up and skip down the aisle and go home furious about it.

'It had a deep voice for an ordinary frog—betwixt a French horn and a bark-mill. And Mrs Barnes told me herself that often, when John'd get comfortably fixed in bed and was just dropping off into a nap, the frog'd think it was a convenient time for some music; and after hopping about a bit, it'd all at once grind out three or four awful "Bloo-oo-ood-a-nouns" and wake Mrs Barnes and the baby, and start things up generally all around the house. And—would you believe it?—if that frog felt maybe a little frisky, or p'r'aps had some tune running through its head, it'd keep on that way for hours. It worried Barnes.

'I dunno whether it was that that killed his wife or not; but anyhow, when she died Barnes wanted to marry again, and he went for a while to see Miss Flickers, who lives out yer on the river road, you know. He courted her pretty steady for a while, and we all thought there was goin' to be a consolidation. But she was telling my wife that one evening Barnes had just taken hold of her hand and told her he loved her, when all of a sudden something said, "Bloo-oo-oo-ood-a-nou-ou-oun!"

'"What on earth's that?" asked Miss Flickers, looking sorter scared.

'"I dunno," said Barnes; "it sounds like somebody making a noise in the cellar." Lied, of course, for he knew mighty well what it was.

'"'Pears to me's if it was under the sofa," says she.

'"Maybe it wasn't anything, after all," says Barnes, when just then the frog, he feels like running up the scales again, and he yells out, "Bloo-oo-ood-a-nou-ou-oun!"

'"Upon my word," says Miss Flickers, "I believe you've got a frog in your pocket, Mr Barnes; now, haven't you?"

'Then he gets down on his knees and owns up to the truth,

and swears he 'll do his best to git rid of the frog; and all the time he is talking the frog is singing exercises and scales and oratorios inside of him, and worse than ever, too, because Barnes drank a good deal of ice-water that day, and it made the frog hoarse—ketched cold, you know.

'But Miss Flickers, she refused him—said she might 've loved him, only she couldn't marry any man that had continual music in his interior.

'So Barnes, he was the most disgusted man you ever saw. Perfectly sick about it. And one day he was lying on the bed gaping, and that frog unexpectedly made up its mind to come up to ask Barnes to eat more carefully, maybe, and it jumped out on the counterpane. After looking about a bit it came up and tried three or four times to hop back, but he kept his mouth shut, and killed the frog with the back of a hair-brush. Ever since then he runs his drinking-water through a strainer, and he hates frogs worse than you and me hate poison. Now, that 's the honest truth about Barnes; you ask him if it ain't.'

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## No. 5 COLLECT STREET.—S. J. Pardessus.

At the corner of Chamber and Collect Streets, New York, there once stood an unpretentious brick house, occupied by a worthy landlord of foreign birth as a private first-class hotel. The inmates were mostly of French and Spanish origin, and this place was held in high estimation by the goodly citizens of that day.

Among the guests was one Mons. Rifflard, who was halting there for a day or two on his way from Paris to Montreal. He understood the English language imperfectly, and could only command a word here and there to make himself understood.

With this simple introduction we will now proceed to relate his adventures on the first evening of his visit. Mons. Rifflard, entering the office of the hotel, requested the attendant to direct him to some respectable place of amusement in the vicinity, where he might spend a pleasant evening (an English theatre for preference), as he wished to lose no opportunity of acquiring the language.

The clerk, accompanying him to the door, begged him to direct his vision over and away across the Park, directly between the Rotunda, on the opposite corner, and the 'old gray-stone jail for debtors' (since transformed into the 'Hall of Records'), to the large building brilliantly lighted up, and known as the Park Theatre, or 'Old Drury.' Monsieur, perceiving it as directed, bowed politely, and, thanking the young man, departed for his destination; but coming to a sudden halt, and retracing his steps with 'Mille pardons,' asked the clerk to give him the name and the number of the street. 'Ah, yes,' replied the latter; 'No. 5 Collect Street.' 'Bien!' responded Monsieur; 'I will repeat it often in English on my way there.' And so he continued onward, repeating '5 Collect Street, 5 Collect Street,' and as he proceeded accelerated his pace and the repetition of '5 Collect Street, 5 Collect Street,' &c., till, arriving at his destination, he found himself quite out of breath, and the name of the street changed to '5 Colley Street.'

Quite a line of persons had formed, reaching to the box-office, into which our friend fell, and leisurely he progressed, repeating '5 Colley Street.' At last, reaching the pigeon-hole, he plunged his hand into it, crying out, 'Von tickette, 5 Colley Street.' The ticket-seller, quite astonished at being addressed in this way, looked at the muttering visitor rather severely on handing the ticket; but, regardless of the angry look, he grasped the card, with a bow, and 'Number 5'—now '5 Colleytie Street'—passed on, and taking a front seat in the dress-circle, placed his elbows on the velvet-padded cushion, kept his eyes on the green curtain in front, and still mumbled over, '5 Colleytie Street, 5 Colleytie Street.' The ladies and gentlemen, on entering, looked with some distrust upon the strangely-behaving gentleman, and naturally moved away from close contact with him. Still in the same attitude, he muttered over, '5 Colleytie Street.'

The play was *Macbeth*, and in the second scene of the second act (commonly called the murder scene) the whole audience, intent upon the dreadful events transpiring, and quieted down to that degree that the least whisper could be distinctly heard as Macbeth rushes forward, exclaiming, 'I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?' were suddenly aroused by our

excited hero, who, also interested in the tragedy, had forgotten his self-imposed task, and springing to his feet with a wild look, screamed out, '*Ah! J'ai oublié, j'ai oublié! Oh! sabre de bois!* I have—er—heem. No, I no have—er—heem. Not you, Monsieur, nor Madame Macabees. Mais mine—vat you call?—ah, oui, mine memorie. I no remembaire ze street; hee 's run avay.'

Immediately Macbeth, with his poniard, and Lady Macbeth, became, as it were, transfixed with astonishment, while from all parts of the house arose the cry of 'Put him out!' followed by a rude seizure of Rifflard's person, a lifting up from his feet, and a precipitate rushing toward the doors, amid loud yelling and his energetic gesticulations to make himself understood.

In much less time than it requires to recite the event, poor Mons. Rifflard found himself, in a very dilapidated condition, upon the sidewalk in front of the theatre. While gaining breath and contemplating his situation, a hackman accosted him with, 'Take a carriage, sir?' The manner of the man, appearing to him so kindly, warmed the bewildered stranger, and suggested the inquiry, 'You vill take me vare I shall vant to go?'

'Yes, sir; certainly. Step in.'

After being seated the driver asked him where he should drive to.

'*Drive?* Bien! vare I vant to go.'

'But the street, sir, and the number?'

'Yes, street—vare I vant to go.'

The hackman, finding finally that his customer could give him no further information, and being somewhat of a wag, requested him to alight and go to the driver next behind, who would be sure to give him entire satisfaction. Our hero went to the next one on the stand as directed, and repeated the question, 'You shall take me vare I vant to go?'

'That I will, sir, and briskly, too. What 's the direction?'

'*Direction!*' repeated Rifflard. 'No, not direction, mais vare I vant to go?'

'Well, I don't know anything about that. Tell me where you wish to be taken, and I will drive you there.'

'Drive! No, no! Look, I vill give you von dollare—two

dollare—t'ree dollare—you take me vare I shall vant to go, eh?'

'Well, you see, my friend,' responded the driver, 'as I don't know where you want to go, I can't drive you there; so you had better get out and try the man next below.'

Rifflard, supposing he had mistaken the carriage the first driver had directed him to, descended and went to the other. After experiencing the same result as in the former cases, he stepped out upon the sidewalk, and was met by a city watchman, who had observed all that we have described, and taken in the facts of the case—that the man was of gentle manners, a stranger unable to make his wants known, and was, therefore, a fit subject for police protection. So, taking him in a kindly way by the arm, he motioned that he should go with him over there, pointing to the City Hall. Monsieur took in the watchman's meaning at once, and pleasantly accepted the invitation, relating to him on the way there the whole story of his troubles, which might have interested his hearer had he delivered it in English, or even been less Frenchy in the violence of his gestures. As it was, the watchman could only act in a sort of affirmative way, by answering, 'Yes! oh yes! I see,' as the Frenchman would once in a while stop short and look at him inquiringly.

In those days the captain of the watch occupied a desk standing upon an elevated platform immediately in front of the door of entrance, and at the moment of the watchman and Rifflard's début was having a cat's nap; but arousing himself, he listened to the 'aid's' account of the matter, at the conclusion of which he requested him to step aside while he interrogated 'the party.' With a loud voice, supposing it the most efficacious way of making the expectant Frenchman understand the English language, he demanded:

'Your name!'

'Nem!—nem—ah, oui, nom? Emile Rifflard!'

'Residence!'

'Ah, bien! residence! Rue des Enfants rouge, numero 27 à Paris. Mais celui de New York, je viens d'oublier.'

'What 's all that he says?' queried the captain, looking interrogatively at those standing around. No answer being given, he

again rallied and asked, 'What Street do'—— But before he could finish the sentence, Rifflard, bursting out in a joyful manner, fairly screamed out, 'Street! ah, bravo! bravissimo! Street! bien! Look, suposse von mane do go to von grande dinnère. He is polite to ze ladies and eat onley a leetle bit, till ven ze dessert do come he is moche hungry, and do eat zen several piece of pie. He do go home, he go to bed, mais in ze meedle of ze night he vake up vis somesing verray bad here'—(*hand on the chest*)—'vot you call zat, eh?'

'That? Why, that 's—that 's an indigestion pain.'

'No, no, not Indigestion-pain Street—non. Suposse von mane do go to von grande dinnère.' (*Excitedly.*) 'He is alvays polite to ze ladies, eat onley a leetle bit of soupe, a leetle beefe, a leetle cheeck-en, a leetle feeshe, some dessert, drink some Bordeaux and some Champagne, a leetle café viz ze Cognac and like before. He do go home, he go to bed, he put on hees nightcap and go to sleeps; but bombye in ze meedle of ze night he do see ze vindow open, and von great a big giant, viz large moustache and big boots like zat'—(*showing half-way up the thigh*)—'do come in and valke to hees bed, shump up and seat on his—his—er—vaistcoat, vich make heem come verray bad here'—(*placing the hand a trifle lower than before*). 'Vot you call zat, eh?'

'Ah, now I have it, sure,' exclaimed the captain; 'it 's a bilious attack.'

'Non, non, not Beelums-tack Street—non.' (*Louder.*) 'Suposse von mane do go to von grande dinnère. He care not for ze polite to ze ladies, bote he eat moche soupe, moche beefe, moche cheeck-en, moche feeshe, drink red vine, vite vine, plenty. Zen eat dessert, von dozaine peece pie, take café, Cognac, ecetera. Zen he go home, he go to bed, he put on hees bonnet de nuit, and go to sleeps. In leetle vile ze same vindow do open, and ze great a big giant vis ze big boots do come into ze room, and aftare hees heels ze vife of ze giant. Zey valk to hees bed, and von aftare ze ozare zay shump up and stand—er—on ze top of hees—hees—eh, bien!—hees estomache, vich make him keek, and come so verray bad here'—(*placing the hand lower than before, interrogatively*). 'Vat you call zem, eh?' (*Doubling up.*)

'There is no mistaking you now,' said the captain; 'it 's a nightmare.'

'Non, non—tonnère, non! It ees not ze Nightmare Street.'

'Well, then,' resumed the captain, 'if it is not that, it surely must be a big old colic.'

'Ah, le voila! Colique! 5 Colique Street take me. All ze time vare I vant to go.'

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## THE EMANCIPATION OF MAN.—ANON.

She looked a very severe kind of a woman when she came into the sanctum, and all the seniors became instinctively very busy and so absorbed in their work that they did not see her, which left the youngest man on the staff an easy prey, for he looked at the visitor with a little natural politeness, and was even soft enough to offer her a chair.

'You are the editor?' she said in a deep, bass voice.

He tried to say 'Yes' so that she could hear him, while his colleagues in the sanctum couldn't; but it was a failure, for the woman gave him dead away in a minute.

'You are!' she shouted. 'Then listen to me; look at me. What am I?'

The foolish youngest man looked at her timidly, and ventured to say in a feeble voice that she looked to be about forty-sev'——

'Am I not a woman?' she said.

The youngest young man weakly tried to correct his former error, and said she seemed more like a girl——

But again she broke in on him with a scornful hiss:

'Gir-r-r-l!' she said. 'I am a woman!—a woman with all the heaven-born aspirations, the fathomless feelings, the aggressive courage, and the indomitable will of a woman. What can you see on my face?'

The position of the youngest man on the staff was pitiable, but none of the old heads appeared to observe it. At least they didn't offer to help him out. So he looked at her face for a second, and said timidly:

'Freckl'——

'Nursling!' she shrieked. 'Had you the soulful eyes of a free man you could see shining on my brow the rising light of a brighter day.'

'Could I?' asked the youngest man timidly.

'Yes, you could I!' the woman said in tones of immeasurable scorn. 'Now hear me. Have you a—— But I cannot bring myself to use that hateful expression in the style of masculine possession. Are you anybody's husband?'

The youngest man blushed deeply, and said that he wasn't as yet, but he had some hopes——

'And you expect your—that is, you expect the woman whose husband you will be to support you?'

The youngest man blushed more keenly than before, and tremblingly admitted that he had some expectations—that—that—the only daughter of his proposed father-in-law, if he might put it in that way——

'Yah!' snarled the woman. 'Now let me tell you the day of woman's emancipation is at hand. From this time we are free—fer-ree! You must look for other slaves to bend and cringe before your majesties and wait upon you like slaves. You will feel the change in your affairs since we have burst our chains, and how will you live without the aid of women? Who makes your shirts now?' she added fiercely.

The youngest man miserably said that a tailor in Jefferson Street made his.

'H'm,' said the woman, somewhat disconcerted. 'Well, who washes 'em, then?' she added triumphantly.

'A Chinaman just west of Fifth Street,' the youngest man said, with a hopeful light in his eyes.

The woman glared at him and groaned under her breath, but she came at him again with:

'Proud worm, who cooks your victuals?'

The youngest man said truly that he didn't know the name of the cook at his restaurant, but he was a man about forty years old and round as a barrel, with whiskers like the stuffing of a sofa.

The woman looked as though she was going to strike him.

'Well,' she said, as one who was leading a forlorn hope, 'who makes up your bed and takes care of your room?'

The youngest man replied, with an air of truth and frankness, that he roomed with a railroad conductor, and an ex-Pullman sleeping-car porter took care of their room.

She paused when she reached the door, and turned upon him with the face of a drowning man who is only five feet away from a life-buoy.

'Miserable dependent!' she cried, 'who sews on your buttons?'

The youngest man on the staff rose to his feet with a proud, happy look on his face.

'Haven't a sewed button on a single garment,' he cried triumphantly; 'patents, every one of 'em, fastened on like copper rivets, and nothing but studs and collar-buttons on my shirts. Haven't had a button sewed on for three years. Patent buttons last for years after the clothes have gone to decay.'

And the woman fled down the winding passage and the labyrinthine stairs with a hollow groan, while the other members of the staff, breaking through their heroic reserve, clustered around the youngest man and congratulated him upon the emancipation of his sex.

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## HOW MR COVILLE COUNTED THE SHINGLES ON HIS HOUSE.—James M. Bailey.

There are men who dispute what they do not understand. Mr Coville is such a man. When he heard a carpenter say that there were so many shingles on the roof of his house, because the roof contained so many square feet, Coville doubted the figures; and when the carpenter went away he determined to test the matter by going up on the roof and counting them. And he went up there. He squeezed through the scuttle—Coville weighs sixteen stone—and then sat down on the roof and worked his way carefully and deliberately toward the gutter. When he got part way down he heard a sound between him and the shingles, and became aware that there was an interference, some way, in further locomotion. He tried to turn over and crawl back, but the obstruction held him. Then he tried to move a little, in hopes that the trouble would prove but temporary; but an

increased sound convinced him that either a nail or a sliver had hold of his cloth, and that if he would save any of it he must use caution. His folks were in the house, but he did not make them hear; and besides, he didn't want to attract the attention of the neighbours. So he sat there until after dark, and thought. It would have been an excellent opportunity to have counted the shingles, but he neglected to use it. His mind appeared to run in other channels. He sat there an hour after dark, seeing no one he could notify of his position. Then he saw two boys approaching the gate from the house, and, reaching there, stop. It was light enough for him to see that one of the two was his son; and although he objected to having the other boy know of his misfortune, yet he had grown tired of holding on to the roof, and concluded he could bribe the strange boy into silence. With this arrangement mapped out, he took his knife and threw it so that it would strike near to the boys and attract their attention. It struck nearer than he anticipated. In fact, it struck so close as to hit the strange boy on the head, and nearly brained him. As soon as he recovered his equilibrium he turned on Coville's boy, who, he was confident, had attempted to kill him, and introduced some astonishment and bruises in his face. Then he threw him down, and kicked him in the side, and banged him on the head, and drew him over into the gutter, and pounded his legs, and then hauled him back to the walk again, and knocked his head against the gate. And all the while the elder Coville sat on the roof and screamed for the police, but couldn't get away. And then Mrs Coville dashed out with a broom, and contributed a few novel features to the affair at the gate; and one of the boarders dashed out with a double-barrelled gun, and, hearing the cries from the roof, looked up there, and espying a figure which was undoubtedly a burglar, drove a handful of shot into its legs. With a howl of agony, Coville made a plunge to dodge the missiles, freed himself from the nail, lost his hold on the roof, and went sailing down the shingles with awful velocity, both legs spread out, his hair on end, and his hands making desperate but fruitless efforts to save himself. He was so frightened that he lost his power of speech, and when he passed over the edge of the roof, with twenty feet of tin gutter hitched to him, the boarder

gave him the contents of the other barrel, and then drove into the house to load up again. The unfortunate Coville struck into a cherry-tree, and thence bounded to the ground, where he was recognised, picked up by the assembled neighbours, and carried into the house. A new doctor is making a good day's wages picking the shot out of his legs. The boarder has gone into the country to spend the summer, and the junior Coville, having sequestered a piece of brick in his handkerchief, is lying low for that other boy. He says that before the calm of another Sabbath rests on New England there will be another boy in Danbury who can't wear a cap.

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## MR COVILLE'S EASY-CHAIR.—JAMES M. BAILEY.

Since the unfortunate accident to Mr Coville while on the roof counting the shingles, he has been obliged to keep pretty close to the house. Last Wednesday he went out into the yard for the first time; and on Friday Mrs Coville got him an easy-chair, which proved a great comfort to him. It is one of those chairs that can be moved by the occupant to form almost any position by means of ratchets. Mr Coville was very much pleased with this new contrivance, and the first forenoon did nothing but sit in it and work it in all ways. He said such a chair as that did more good in this world than a hundred sermons. He had it in his room—the front bedroom upstairs; and there he would sit and look out of the window, and enjoy himself as much as a man can whose legs have been ventilated with shot. Monday afternoon he got in the chair as usual. Mrs Coville was out in the back-yard hanging up clothes, and the son was across the street drawing a lath along a picket fence. Sitting down, he grasped the sides of the chair with both hands to settle it back, when the whole thing gave way, and Mr Coville came violently to the floor.

For an instant the unfortunate gentleman was benumbed by the suddenness of the shock; the next he was aroused by acute pain in each arm, and the great drops of sweat oozed from his forehead when he found that the little finger of each hand had caught in the little ratchets and was as firmly held as in a vice. There he

lay on his back with the end of a round sticking in his side, and both hands perfectly powerless. The least move of his body aggravated the pain which was chasing up his arms. He screamed for help, but Mrs Coville was in the back-yard telling Mrs Coney, next door, that she didn't know what Coville would do without that chair; and so she didn't hear him. He pounded the floor with his stockinged feet; but the younger Coville was still drawing emotion from the fence across the way, and all other sounds were rapidly sinking into insignificance. Besides, Mr Coville's legs were not sufficiently recovered from the late accident to permit of their being profitably used as mallets.

How he did despise that offspring, and how fervently he did wish the owner of that fence would light on that boy and reduce him to powder! Then he screamed again, and howled and shouted 'Maria!' But there was no response. What if he should die alone there in that awful shape! The perspiration started afresh, and the pain in his arms assumed an awful magnitude. Again he shrieked 'Maria!' but the matinee across the way only grew in volume, and the unconscious wife had gone into Mrs Coney's, and was trying on that lady's redingote. Then he prayed, and howled, and coughed, and swore, and then apologised for it, and prayed and howled again, and screamed at the top of his voice the awfullest things he would do to that boy if Heaven would only spare him and show him an axe.

Then he opened his mouth for one final shriek, when the door opened and Mrs Coville appeared with a smile on her face and Mrs Coney's redingote on her back. In one glance she saw that something awful had happened to Joseph, and, with wonderful presence of mind, she screamed for help, and then fainted away, and ploughed headlong into his stomach. Fortunately the blow deprived him of speech, else he might have said something that he would ever have regretted; and before he could regain his senses Mrs Coney dashed in and removed the grief-stricken wife. But it required a blacksmith to cut Coville loose. He is again back in bed, with his mutilated fingers resting on pillows, and there he lies all day concocting new forms of death for the inventor of that chair; and hoping nothing will happen to his son until he can get well enough to administer it himself.

## MR POTTS'S HAT.—MAX ADELER.

On the first Sunday that the congregation worshipped in the new church Mr Potts attended; and, in accordance with his custom, he placed his silk high hat just outside of the pew in the aisle. In a few moments Mrs Jones entered, and, as she proceeded up the aisle her abounding skirts caught Mr Potts's hat and rolled it nearly to the pulpit. Mr Potts pursued his hat with feelings of indignation; and when Mrs Jones took her seat he walked back, brushing the hat with his sleeve. A few moments later Mrs Hopkins came into the church; and, as Mr Potts had again placed his hat in the aisle, Mrs Hopkins's skirts struck it and swept it along about twenty feet, and left it lying on the carpet in a demoralised condition. Mr Potts was singing a hymn at the time, and he didn't miss it. But a moment later, when he looked over the end of the pew to see if it was safe, he was furious to perceive that it was gone. He skirmished up the aisle after it again, red in the face, and uttering sentences which were very much out of place in a sanctuary. However, he put the hat down again and determined to keep his eye on it; but just as he turned his head away for a moment Mrs Smiley came in, and Potts looked around only in time to watch the hat being gathered in under Mrs Smiley's skirts and carried away by them. He started in pursuit, and just as he did so the hat must have rolled against Mrs Smiley's ankles, for she gave a jump and screamed right out in church. Out rolled Mr Potts's hat, and Mr Smiley, being very near-sighted, thought it was a dog, and immediately kicked it so savagely that it flew up into the gallery and lodged on the top of the organ. Mr Potts, perfectly frantic with rage, forgot where he was; and, holding his clinched fist under Smiley's nose, he shrieked, 'I 've half a mind to brain you, you scoundrel!' Then he flung down his hymn-book and rushed from the church. He went home bareheaded, and the sexton brought his humiliating hat around after dinner. After that Mr Potts expressed a purpose to go habitually to Quaker meetings, where he could say his prayers with his hat on his head, and where the skirts of female worshippers are smaller.

## FROM MELANCHOLY TO MIRTH.—Anon.

Yesterday forenoon a man who was crossing Princes Street suddenly began to paw the air with his hands and perform strange antics with his feet; and, after taking plenty of time about it, he came down in a heap. More than fifty people saw the performance, and there was a general laugh. It had not ceased when a man with a funereal countenance pushed his way into the crowd and asked:

'Who is he? What's his name?'—'It's Smith,' answered a voice.

'What Smith?'—'Thomas Smith.'

'Sure?'—'Yes; I've known him for over twenty years.'

'Then I'll laugh,' said the solemn-faced man, and he leaned against the wall and chuckled and laughed until he could hardly get his breath. One of the crowd remarked on his singular conduct, and the laugher wiped the tears from his eyes and replied:

'Gentlemen, nothing tickles me all over so much as to see a man fall down. Ten years ago I was salesman in a wholesale house, with a fine chance for promotion. One day a man just ahead of me fell down, and I laughed. It was our employer, and he discharged me on the spot. Five years later I was engaged to a rich girl. As I came out of the post-office one day a man sprawled out on the pavement, and I laughed till I was sore. It was my Angelina's father, and he broke off the match. Again, I laughed myself out of a position in a bank, and but for the same failure I should to-day have a place in the Custom-House. I have learned wisdom. Now, when I see a man fall I ask his name, and find out if he has any influence to put me out of my clerkship. If he has, I look solemn and pass on. If he hasn't, I la-laugh—ha! ha! ha! Smith, is it? Smith can't do any harm, and—ha! ha! ha! I wouldn't have missed this for a month's sal—ha! ha! ha!'

THE END.

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